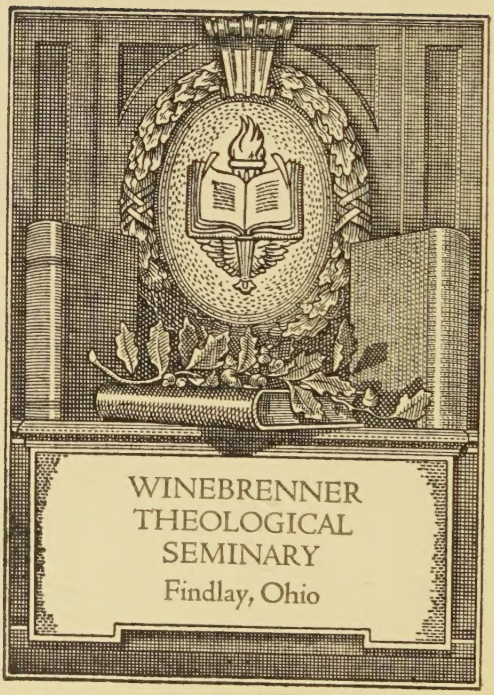
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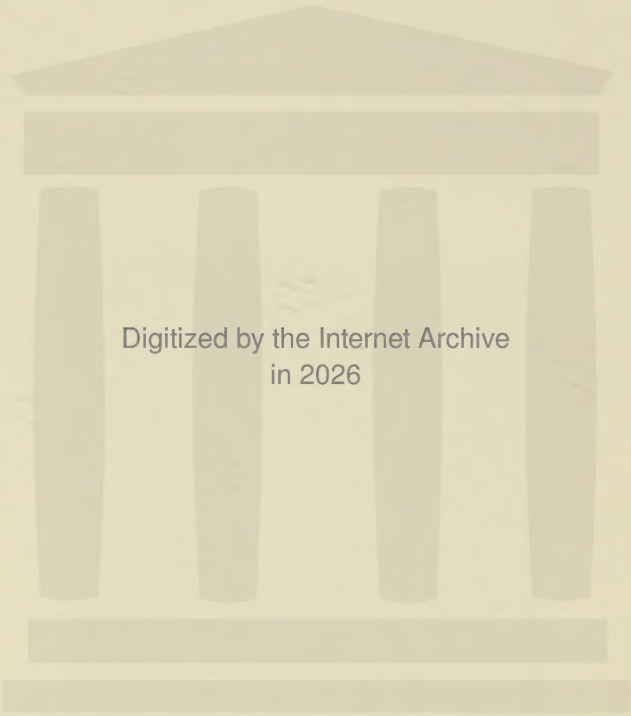
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Thomas Wolsey

CARDINAL WOLSEY, 1471—1530.
From Holbein's portrait at Christ Church.

Thomas Wolsey

Legate and Reformer

By

ETHELRED L. TAUNTON

". . . If I am
Traduced by ignorant tongues, which neither know
My faculties nor person, yet will be
The chronicles of my doing, let me say
'Tis but the fate of place and the rough brake
That virtue must go through."

—*King Henry VIII.*, Act i. sc. 2.

" That churchman bears a bounteous mind indeed,
A hand as fruitful as the land that feeds us;
His dews fall everywhere."

—*Ibid.*, Act i. sc. 3.

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THOMAS WOLSEY

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PREFACE

THE following monograph on Wolsey, as an Ecclesiastic, is a slight addition to the study of the causes which led up to the Reformation. No other writer, so far as I am aware, has treated this side of the character of the great Cardinal of York. His work as a Churchman has been lost sight of in the secular triumphs he achieved: and yet, Wolsey was, before everything, a Churchman; and one with a keen sense of the realities of Religion. Such evidence as I am able to lay before my readers goes to strengthen the conviction I arrived at several years ago, that had his plans for reform not been interfered with by the Divorce, the religious history of England would have been very different. For Wolsey saw the disease, and knew how to apply the remedy.

And in the Divorce, too, it is clear that the

Cardinal is the only one who comes out of the proceedings with clean hands. His treatment of the case has to be separated from Henry's. The Cardinal regarded it as a question of Law; the King as one of theology. I venture to hope that the chapter on the Divorce (X.) will throw some new light on a subject which party spirit on either side has done much to obscure.

As a Roman Catholic priest I have steadily regarded, in my historical studies, utterances of men I deeply revere. Leo XIII. wrote that the first law of history was to say nothing false, then to be bold and impartial in telling the truth. And Cardinal Manning, who was a true Father in Christ to me, notes that he told the same Pope: If the Evangelist did not conceal the sin and the fall of Judas, neither ought we to conceal the sins of bishops and other personages. In following these two eminent men I endeavour to allow full rights to Justice and Truth; for, as a French writer says, those only who admit their own wrong-doing have the right to point out the faults of others.

I desire, in conclusion, to express my sincere

thanks to the Rev. D. B. Binney, M.A., of St. Mary's, Limington, for taking much trouble to provide a picture of Wolsey's first Parish Church; also to Everard Green, Esq., *Rouge Dragon*, for allowing me to use his interesting reading of Wolsey's coat of arms.

E. L. T.

August 6th, 1901.

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THOMAS WOLSEY

LEGATE AND REFORMER

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Prejudice against Wolsey—Fiddes quoted—A new spirit abroad —A true portrait of Wolsey now possible—The *Cardinalis Pacificus*—How Henry VIII. was regarded—Wolsey's secular work—Mr. Brewer on his character—A more "rigid and more dispassionate examination"—Wolsey's ecclesiastical side strangely forgotten—The Eve of the Reformation—The popes of Wolsey's period—Savonarola—Cæsar the master —Its effect upon the Church—Wolsey's opinion.

THE great statesman of the first part of the reign of Henry VIII., Thomas Wolsey, is one of those characters which fascinate historians. But as Fiddes[1] says:—

"There have been few persons, if any, to whom mankind has been obliged for any con-

[1] Richard Fiddes (1671–1725) was born at Hunmanby, near Scarborough, and in 1687 entered as a commoner at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Three years after he went to University College, where he took his B.A. in 1691. In 1695 he became rector of Halsham in Holderness, and in 1712 he took up his residence in London and began a literary career, and became

siderable benefactions, that have met with such ungrateful usage in return for them, as Cardinal Wolsey. It may be questioned whether, in all the histories that are extant, a like instance can be found, in any nation, of so general a prejudice, as that under which his name has suffered." [1]

Nor has this prejudice been confined to anti-papal writers. Indeed, in their hands the memory of the great Churchman has suffered less than in those of Roman Catholics who, not knowing the real state of affairs, have attributed to him the disaster of the Divorce with its subsequent miseries. But Time brings forth strange revenges. There is a spirit now abroad which considers bare Truth a virtue in itself and does not imagine the cause of Religion can be served in any other or better way. This spirit considers the history of the Past as a series of providential lessons for our guidance To-day;

a friend of Swift. In 1724 appeared his "Life of Wolsey," in which, says the "Dictionary of National Biography," the noticeable features "are that it attempted to vindicate Wolsey's memory from the obloquy which had persistently pursued it, and also that it took a view of the Reformation less unfavourable to the mediæval Church than that of most protestant writers. Fiddes was immediately attacked both by press and pulpit." Dr. Knight, Prebendary of Ely, in a sermon denounced him as "throwing dirt upon the happy reformation of religion among us." The "Life of Wolsey" is a valuable work, and is founded on an intimate knowledge of the times and the documentary evidence, such as the writer had access to. A second edition, with the collection of documents, appeared in 1726, and has been used in this present work.

[1] "The Life of Cardinal Wolsey" (1726), p. iii.

and it were surely foolishness to neglect the teaching of the mysterious ways in which God moves.

Since access has been granted to the Public State Papers, both in England and abroad, it has been possible to form a true portrait of such a man as Wolsey. We have enough to tell us what the man was doing and why he did it, and thus we are able to put together, from these scattered remnants of the Past, a picture sufficiently intelligible in all its main features. Wolsey stands out as the greatest statesman England has ever produced; and it is not going beyond what records reveal if we say his was the master-mind of the age. No one could come up to him. Spain was no match: and France was only too glad to obtain his support. For a time he held the destinies of Europe in his hand. He raised England from a third or fourth rate power to the position of arbiter of Christendom, and had as one of his most glorious titles that of *Cardinalis Pacificus*.

Grand in his conceptions and magnificent in his dealings, he was yet the truest servant king ever had. The devotion of men like Wolsey and More to Henry VIII. is somewhat difficult to understand nowadays. There was something more than personal affection; there was the conviction that Henry represented the power from God, and stood for that peace which had returned

at last after the War of the Roses. To oppose the King was therefore not only disobedience to the ordinance of God, but it was also risking the opening of old wounds. Henry was the centre of all English nationalism.

"Round him all parties revolved with unhesitating obedience; alike those who wished to see him independent of all spiritual control and his authority enlisted in favour of the Reformation, as those who believed that such authority was the strongest barrier against dangerous innovations and the surest safeguard for the Church. . . . So both are concerned to magnify the royal authority as much as possible, and oppose it as little as they might, not criticising narrowly Henry's actions or his wishes, but blindly believing that in serving him they were serving the highest interests of the Faith which they professed."[1]

This description of the state of affairs goes far to explain much that is difficult for us to understand in days when the importance and rights of the individual are paramount, and authority itself is exposed to the search-light of that wholesome public opinion which asserts that those who claim to rule should themselves be worthy of ruling.

But it is not the purpose of this study to consider the secular work of the great Cardinal of

[1] Brewer, "The Reign of Henry VIII.," ii. p. 456.

York. This has been done beyond compare by the late Mr. Brewer in the "Introductions to the Calendars of State Papers" (1509–1530) which he edited for the Master of the Rolls.[1] In summing up the character of Wolsey, he says :—

"In spite of all . . . the Cardinal still remains, and will ever remain, as the one prominent figure of this period. The interest concentrated in his life, character, and actions is not eclipsed by any of his contemporaries. The violent calumnies resting on his memory have in some degree been already lightened by justice, and clearer views of the events of his time and the characters of the chief agents. It needs not apprehend an examination still more rigid and more dispassionate. Not free from faults by any means, especially from those faults and failings the least consistent with his ecclesiastical profession, the Cardinal was perfectly free from those meaner though less obtrusive vices which disfigured the age and the men that followed him—vices to which moralists are tolerant and the world indulgent." [2]

It is just this "more rigid and more dispassionate" examination we propose to undertake in these pages. Mr. Brewer, as was perhaps natural, did not understand one side of the

[1] Since Mr. Brewer's death these Introductions have been published separately in two volumes, under the title of "The Reign of Henry VIII." (1509–1530).

[2] *Op. cit.*, ii. pp. 457–58.

character of the great Cardinal. In "The Reign of Henry VIII.," Wolsey's work as an ecclesiastic is entirely passed over; and in all biographies, even the most recent, the same omission is to be found. This is strange, for although Wolsey's name stands high as a statesman, he has as high a claim to be known as a great Churchman. He certainly need not fear an examination both close and severe, for he emerges from the ordeal with increased splendour. "Those faults and failings the least consistent with his ecclesiastical profession," will be found, however regrettable, to be the results of an age not unaccustomed to such departures from the laws of Christian morality.

To understand the position in which Wolsey found himself, it is necessary to take into account not only the prevalent political feelings of the day, but also the state of the Church. We have recently had set before us vivid pictures of what the people in England were thinking and doing before the crisis came. In such pages the reader will find that the state of Religion in England, the relations of priests and people, the intellectual and moral tone, were good; and that the rock upon which the English Church, driven by the storm of the Divorce, split, was not that of a need of reformation in the religion of the English people themselves. We must, therefore, bear in mind that the life of Wolsey was spent

under the influences of such popes as Sixtus IV. (1471–84), Innocent VIII. (1484–92), Alexander VI. (1492–1503), Pius III. (1503), Julius II. (1503–13), Leo X. (1513–21), Hadrian VI. (1522–23) and Clement VII. (1523–34). Except the name of Pius III., who only reigned twenty-six days, and, certainly, that of Hadrian VI.,[1] who, during the twenty months he filled the Papal Chair, showed himself alive to the real gravity of some of the existing abuses in the Church, the other popes were worldly men. Thus Wolsey's earliest impressions as an ecclesiastic were received during the reign of Alexander VI. By the fate of the heroic Savonarola, the last of the prophets, the young priest could hear the answer made to the cries for reformation which, for nearly two hundred years, had gone up from a long-suffering and distracted Christendom. Moreover, there was an object-lesson daily before his eyes. He saw the realities of the Church sacrificed to the unrealities of the passing hour. He saw Churchmen neglecting that which was God's for

[1] Hadrian VI. told his nuncio, Cheregate, to declare at the Diet of Nuremburg (1522): "We know that for some years there have existed many abominations in this Holy See, abuses in spiritual things, excesses in acts of power; all things in short changed and perverted. What we deplored in Alexander VI. should be pointed out. Nor need we wonder if the sickness has descended from the head to the members, from the Supreme Pontiff to the inferior prelates. We have all, prelates and ecclesiastics, turned aside each one to his own way, nor has there been for a long time one who has done well."—Raynaldus, *Annal. Ecc.* (ed. 1755), vol. xxxi. p. 396.

what they could get from Cæsar. Writing in the days of the fulness of his power, Wolsey says: "I do not see how it may stand with God's will that the Head of the Church should involve himself in war by joining with temporal princes. Since these leagues in the Pope's name began, God hath sent affliction upon the Church and upon Christendom. Contentions to advance particular families have not furthered the papal dignity."[1]

[1] Brewer's "State Papers of Henry VIII.," vol. iv. Part I. n. 1017. (Quoted hereafter as "Brewer.")

CHAPTER II

WOLSEY'S EARLY YEARS

His parentage — Date of his birth — The Grammar School at Ipswich—Goes to Oxford—His progress—Bachelor of Arts at fifteen—Old-world system of education—Studies divinity —Polydore Vergil—Fellow of his College—Bursar—Schoolmaster—The Marquis of Dorset—Wolsey's father's will—His ordination—Becomes parish priest of Limington—Is put into the stocks—Sir Amyas Pawlet—The alleged reasons of the indignity—Examination thereof—Wolsey's behaviour—The knight's repentance—A noted pluralist—The Avignon System of Finance—England and the exactions of the *Curia*—The wars of the Popes—Wolsey chaplain to Archbishop Deane—Goes to Calais—Sir John Nanphant—Becomes one of the royal chaplains—A born administrator—No false humility—Professional moralists—Wolsey at Court—His friends—Fox of Winchester—Mission to Flanders—His preferments—The new king—Wolsey's dignity of manner—A scholar—More preferments—Three bishoprics in a year—Payment for Bulls —Leo X.—Giulio, Cardinal de' Medici—The victim of his age—Elect of Lincoln—England a storehouse of delights— Rome clings to *annates*—Enormous sums for expediting Bulls—Archbishop of York—The cost of the Pall.

In Ipswich, the county town of Suffolk, in the reign of Edward IV. (1441–83) lived Robert and Joan Wolsey, or, as they spelt it, *Wulcy*.[1] Ac-

[1] It is not an uncommon name in early English days, and is of Teutonic origin. It seems by its termination to be a local name = Wulfsey, *i.e.* the islet belonging to a man named Wulf or Ulf. The Cardinal always spells his name *Wulcy*. But in the *Liber Nominum* of Magdalen College the name appears Wolsey, Wulcy, Wolsy, Wolcy, Wulsey, and Woulsey. (See Bloxam, iii. p. 25.)

cording to tradition they dwelt "in St. Nicholas' parish and street on the left hand going down at the left corner of a little avenue leading to the churchyard."[1] The evidence we have goes to prove that Robert Wolsey was a grazier,[2] and perhaps also a butcher in well-to-do circumstances. He held positions of trust and respect in his native town. Giustinian, the Venetian ambassador, in his report of 1519, when speaking of the Cardinal, simply refers to him as of "low origin."[3] From a petition to Henry VIII. in 1515,[4] the family appears to have been then living at Sternfeld, by Farnham, an agricultural village twenty-four miles from Ipswich.

To Robert and Joan were born several children, three sons and one daughter.[5] One, born probably in March 1471, was Thomas, the future cardinal. The exact date of his birth is uncertain. Richard Fiddes, in his "Life of Cardinal Wolsey," gives the above date, and he is corroborated by George Cavendish,[6] sometime

[1] Gough's "Camden Brit.," ii. p. 85 (ed. 1789).

[2] Wool at that time was England's chief export, and Suffolk was one of the centres of the trade.

[3] "Calendar of Venetian State Papers," ii. p. 560.

[4] Brewer, ii. n. 1368.

[5] The daughter, Elizabeth, married "John Fayrechild of Syneton in co. Suff. gent."—Brewer, ibid.

[6] George Cavendish [1500–1561?], whose work, the "Life of Cardinal Wolsey," has a high place among English biographies, was the eldest son of Thomas Cavendish, Clerk of the Pipe in the Exchequer, who married the heiress of John Smith of Padbrook Hall in Suffolk. George married a niece of Sir Thomas More.

gentleman-usher to the Cardinal. Cavendish, a first-rate authority for what passed under his eyes, says that his master was fifty-nine in 1530, and gives a particular reason for making that assertion. In spite of other evidence, which disagrees and places the birth somewhat between 1471 and 1476, we are inclined to accept Cavendish's date as based on an official reckoning. The day of the birth is not known, but it would not be altogether baseless were we to guess that St. Thomas of Aquin,[1] whose feast

In 1526 or 1527 he became gentleman-usher to the Cardinal, who says of him, "abandoning his own country, wife and children, his own house and family, his rest and quietness, only to serve me." He was the faithful and intimate companion of the Cardinal during the latter part of his life, and, after Wolsey's death, when he was examined before the Privy Council, the Duke of Norfolk bore testimony that he "both justly and painfully served the Cardinal, his master, like a just and diligent servant." He retired to Glemsford in Suffolk, and henceforth led a retired life. Keeping to the old Religion in spite of the changes, during the time of Mary he began to write his account of Wolsey. Circulated at first in manuscript, the work was published, in a garbled state, in 1641. It has been frequently reprinted. Singer brought out the best edition (used in this work) in 1827, which has been reproduced in 1852, 1855, 1885, 1893 (Kelmscott Press), 1896, and 1901. The work was for a long time attributed to George's younger brother William, the founder of Chatsworth (1553); but the question was settled by Rev. J. Hunter of Bath, in a letter which is to be found in vol. ii. of Singer's edition. The late Bishop of London, in the "Dictionary of National Biography," on which this note is founded, says: "The view of Wolsey taken by Cavendish is substantially the same as that of Shakespeare, and it is by no means improbable that Shakespeare had read Cavendish in manuscript." It would have been more accurate to say "the writers of the play," for, as we shall show, Shakespeare was only a part author with Fletcher.

[1] There was a Dominican Friary in Ipswich.

falls on March 7th, may have given him his name.

Wolsey is said to have begun his letters at the Grammar School of Ipswich,[1] which was founded at least in 1477. He was a child gifted with talents of the highest order, and with the power of intense application. Such progress did he make that, when only eleven years old, he was sent to Oxford. Though Anthony Wood speaks of "other good friends" helping, there is no other evidence for supposing that any other than his father paid the university expenses.

Wolsey entered at St. Mary Magdalen's College,[2] which had been founded, some forty years before, by the pious Bishop Waynfleet.[3] Once entered, the boy lost no time, and, in the words of Cavendish, "he prospered so in learning that, as he told me (in) his own person, he was called the Boy-bachelor; forasmuch as he was made Bachelor of Arts at fifteen years of age, which was a rare thing, and seldom seen."[4] This

[1] Wolsey would have known the Franciscans, who had a convent in his parish. The following verse suggests he owed part of his education to them :—

"*Begot by butchers, but by beggars (bishops) bred,*
How high his honour holds his haughty head."

[2] From the imperfect state of the Records, it is not known whether he was admitted as a chorister, servitor, demy, or commoner.

[3] The present buildings were begun May 5, 1473, when Wolsey was an infant.

[4] "Life of Cardinal Wolsey" (ed. Singer), pp. 4–5.

was in 1485. Two years afterwards he became Master. The old-world system of education by Trivials and Quatrivials was then in full force, and, in the disputations necessary for a degree, Wolsey made a name as a quick and acute reasoner. In order to qualify for the Doctorate he had to chose either the course of Law or Divinity; and it is worth noticing that he who, as Lord Chancellor, was destined to initiate many reforms in legal procedure, did not follow the course of Law, but chose that of Divinity. He applied himself so ardently to the study of St. Thomas that he became noted for a knowledge of theology as it was then taught in the schools. Even his arch-enemy, Polydore Vergil, is obliged to admit he was *in Divinis litteris non indoctus*. So brilliant a scholar was an honour to his College, who elected him Fellow. These Fellowships were preparatory to ordination, for which they gave a title. We are uncertain as to the date of his Fellowship. The College records are silent about Wolsey till the year 1497, when, in a *Liber Nominum*, or Dinner-Book, of that date, he appears as a Master of Arts, and fourteenth on the list of Fellows. As there are the names of four or five Fellows after his, it is likely that he had been elected Fellow a year or two previously. In the *Liber Computi* for 1498, his name appears as holding the position of third Bursar.[1]

[1] Bloxam's "Register of St. Mary Magdalen's College, Oxford," iii. p. 25.

In connection with the College of St. Mary Magdalen was a common grammar school founded in 1456, and to this Wolsey was appointed schoolmaster. According to the *Liber Computi*, he held the post only for six months, and succeeded one Scarbott. Together with this, he was also tutor in his College, and thus got into the larger world for which his abilities so well qualified him; for "the Lord Marquis of Dorset had three of his sons at school there with him, committing as well unto him their virtuous education, as their instruction and learning."[1]

Wolsey was already five-and-twenty when his father died, and at that time was not yet a priest. It may be doubted whether he was then even a deacon. A few days before he died, in the autumn of 1496, Robert Wolsey made his will, in which he says: "Item, I will that if Thomas, my son, be a priest within a year next after my decease, then I will that he sing[2] for me and my friends by the space of a year, and he for to have for his salary 10 marks;[3] and if the said Thomas, my son, be not a priest, then I will that another honest priest sing for me and my friends the term aforesaid, and he to have the salary of 10 marks."

Thomas was appointed one of the executors of the will, under which he received no other legacy

[1] Cavendish, p. 5.

[2] *i.e. Missas canere*, a well-known term for saying mass.

[3] At least £60 of present money.

3. MAGDALEN TOWER.
As finished by Wolsey, when senior bursar.

than the official one. It would seem from this that Wolsey was not yet in sacred orders. He had passed the canonical age for the priesthood; and in those pre-Tridentine days the interstices were not observed. It speaks for his righteousness that the bequest does not appear to have made him take any steps to secure it. It must have been "another honest priest" who said the masses and received the 10 marks, for not till the Lenten ordination of 1498, held in the parish church of St. Peter at Marlborough, by Bishop Augustine Church, titular of Lydda, and suffragan to John Blyth, Bishop of Sarum, was Wolsey ordained priest. In the register of John Blyth there is entered on folio 113 the following:—

"*M. Thomas Wolsey, artium magister Norwicen dioc: diaconus socius perpetuus collegii beate Marie Magdalene universitatis Oxon. per literas etc., ad titulum eiusdem collegii in presbyterum etc.*"[1]

In 1499 Wolsey was elected senior Bursar to his College, and under him the tower, so well loved by all who know Oxford, was finished.[2] That same year, at the Christmas vacations, which began on *O Sapientia*[3] (December 17), he received an invitation from the Marquis of Dorset to spend the holidays with his pupils at Bradgate

[1] "The English Historical Review," ix. p. 709.

[2] It had been begun in 1492.

[3] See *Munimenta Academica* (Roll Series), ii. p. 447.

Park, seven miles to the west of Leicester, where in late years that hapless victim of others' ambition, "Jane, the Queen," was born. Cavendish, in his quaint style, thus relates what occurred :—

"It pleased the said Marquis against a Christmas season to send as well for the schoolmaster as for his children, home to his house, for their recreation in that pleasant and honourable feast. They being then there, my lord, their father, perceived them to be right well employed in learning, for their time; which contented him so well that he, having a benefice in his gift, being at that time void, gave the same to the schoolmaster in reward for his diligence, at his departing after Christmas upon his return to the University."[1]

The living thus bestowed on Wolsey was the quiet one of St. Mary's, at Limington, in the county of Somerset and diocese of Bath and Wells.[2] The village is situated about one and a half miles east of Ilchester, the birthplace of Roger Bacon, the famous Greyfriar. As Wolsey had to finish the University year,[3] it was not till October 1500 that, "having the presentation thereof (*he*) repaired to the Ordinary for his insti-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

[2] The church is of thirteenth-century work, and has a nave 87 feet by 24. It is stone vaulted. A perpendicular tower stands at the west end, and on the north side is a chantry (dedicated to St. Leonard) belonging to the Gurney family.

[3] His term of office as senior Bursar was from September 29, 1499, to the same date in 1500.

tution and induction; then being fully furnished of all necessary instruments at the Ordinary's hands for his preferments, he made speed without farther delay to the said benefice to take thereof possession."[1] He was instituted October 10, 1500.

Hardly had he been inducted and had time to settle down, that is to say, in the summer of 1501, than there happened to the new parish priest one of those incidences of which the bare fact alone is known, while the cause is wrapped in obscurity. The fact is related by Cavendish in these words :—

"One Sir Amyas Pawlet, knight, dwelling in the county thereabout,[2] took an occasion of displeasure against him, upon what grounds I know not: but, sir, by your leave, he was so bold to set the schoolmaster by the feet during his pleasure."[3]

In other words, Wolsey was subjected to the indignity of being set in the public stocks. This is all we really know of the circumstances. After his fall the friends of the New Learning in Religion, who were also of the Boleyn interest, spared no means of insulting the great Cardinal's memory. It was said, and the tale seems to read no further back than a favourite writer in Queen Elizabeth's

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

[2] Hinton St. George, the seat of Earl Poulett, is to the south-west of Limington. Sir Amyas (died 1537) was the grandfather of the gaoler of Mary Queen of Scots.

[3] Ibid., p. 6.

Court, Sir John Harington[1] (1561–1612), that Wolsey had been concerned in a drunken fray. From all we know of the man, his intense application, power of detail and administration, nay, even his desire to stand well with those who could advance him, and taking into consideration also his incessant bad health, we are led to reject at once such a tale. At no time, before or after this event, has drunkenness or the slightest approach to such a thing ever been brought against him by contemporary writers. Another tradition, of like malice, has it that he was thus punished for the sin of incontinency. Sir Roger Wilbraham, Master of Requests to Elizabeth, is given as the authority for the statement; but this is by no means first-hand evidence, nor is it an unbiassed testimony, for, as in the case of Sir John Harington, a courtier of Anne Boleyn's daughter was not likely to speak favourably of Wolsey. Moreover, it must be remembered that in the days of his greatness his enemies, and they were many and fierce, never dared to bring up the subject of the stocks against him. Even Skelton, in his foul-mouthed abuse of the Cardinal, "Why come ye not to Court?" does not mention it. Moreover, when we consider Wolsey's subsequent action, we have proof that in this occurrence there was nothing

[1] "Brief View of the State of the Church of England" (ed. 1653), p. 184.

10. ST. MARY'S, LIMINGTON, SOMERSET.
Wolsey's first living.

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to his discredit. When Chancellor of England (1515) he sent for Sir Amyas, "and after many sharp and heinous words enjoined him to attend upon the Council until he were by them dismissed, and not to depart without license upon an urgent pain and forfeiture."[1] Had there been any shameful fault on the part of the parish priest, Wolsey was far too prudent to stir up muddy waters, and far too just to punish the knight. Nor would it have been in accordance with the dictates of the most ordinary common sense, had Wolsey been at fault, to keep Sir Amyas in London as long as five or six years, free to spread abroad anything to the discredit of the Chancellor. The only punishment meted out to the knight was the "sharp and heinous words," and an enforced residence in London, where we find him, in 1521, filling the honourable position of Treasurer of the Middle Temple, a post, by-the-bye, he could hardly have held in opposition to the will of the powerful Lord Chancellor. Whatever the cause of the indignity may have been, Sir Amyas seems to have admitted his own fault, and tried to atone for it in a way soothing to Wolsey's feelings. During his residence in London the knight rebuilt the gate-house of the Middle Temple, and decorated it with Wolsey's arms, badges, and cognisances.[2]

[1] Cavendish, p. 6.

[2] The gate-house was burnt in 1666.

What was really the cause of Wolsey being set in the stocks will probably never be known. We have given the adverse tradition, but there is another. Thomas Storer (1571–1604) in his metrical "Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey," says the parish priest was the injured party—

"Wronged by a knight for no desert of mine."

If we may be allowed to add to the conjectures, it was very likely the result of a quarrel between the rich man and the vicar, such as is not unknown even in these days. The dispute increased and, at last, the knight won a temporary triumph by inflicting insult by force. It was probably for some gross injustice like this that Lord Chancellor Wolsey, always noted for sternness in dealing with cases of oppression, thought it well in after years to rebuke him with "many sharp and heinous words."

No sooner was he inducted into the living of Limington than other preferments came upon him. He applied for a papal dispensation to hold certain extra benefices, and this was granted on November 3, 1500. As Wolsey was a noted pluralist, perhaps a word might not be amiss as to this practice. Pluralism, or the accumulation of benefices, has always been against the law; but, unhappily, the popes of the time gave a high example of the failure to observe the law. They were accustomed to reward their faithful servants

and their agents with benefices in this country which the holders never saw. What is known as the Avignon System of Finance developed into a method of using the Church at large for the special benefit of members of the Roman Court. It was even discussed by canonists whether the Pope could incur the sin of Simony. Besides *annates* and first-fruits, together with exorbitant charges for Bulls, many of the more lucrative benefices were assigned to the benefit of the officials. The duties attached to these livings were performed by men who received a small pay, while the rest of the income was sent out of the country. And it sometimes happened that money received by means of the contributions from one country was lent by the Pope to help another nation then at war with it.[1] So grave did the scandal eventually become that a strenuous attempt was made at the Council of Trent to declare the obligation of residence a divine precept, and to put down the abuses connected with this traffic in holy things. The first proposition, which was the key to the whole difficulty, was thwarted by those prelates, who were in the majority, and who acted in accordance with the existing practice. In England, long before the time of Wolsey, the civil power had been obliged to take

[1] Clement VI. lent enormous sums to the French king during the long war. He used to say, "My predecessors did not know how to be popes."—Pastor's "History of the Popes" (English ed.), vol. i. p. 92.

the matter in hand, and passed measures which were calculated to check the system of Papal Provisions. But the nation, having vindicated its right, continued in practice to allow the popes to have a free hand in otherwise disposing of moneys left by Englishmen for the benefit of Religion in their own country. It is worthy of remark that England, in those days, acted towards the Pope in a most generous and filial manner; and, often to her own immediate detriment, allowed him to exercise, in temporal matters, a power which Spain, France, and Germany sternly disallowed. Wolsey fell in with the prevailing practice of pluralities, sanctioned and encouraged as it was by those who profited by the money the dispensations cost. But this much may at least be said for him. Had he been spared to complete his great foundations at Oxford and Ipswich, they might in the event have proved of profit to Religion, at least as much as those great works of Julius II. on St. Peter's and the Vatican that were destined to be paid for at so fatal a cost to the Christian world.

Though Wolsey's earliest patron, the Marquis of Dorset, died September 20, 1501, he was already favourably known to the high dignitaries of the English Church. By the end of 1501 we find him chaplain to Henry Deane, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England.

But this appointment did not last long. The Archbishop was old. He resigned the Great Seal July 17, 1502, and died seven months afterwards. Wolsey and another were appointed to carry out the funeral ceremonies of the Primate of all England. A short while after Deane's death Wolsey went to Calais to "Sir John Nanphant, a very grave and ancient knight, who had a great room in Calais under King Henry the Seventh. This knight he served, and behaved him so discreetly and justly, that he obtained the special favour of his said master; insomuch that for his wit, gravity, and just behaviour he committed all the charge of his office unto his chaplain. And, as I understand, the office was the treasurership of Calais, who was, in consideration of his great age, discharged of his chargeable room and returned again into England, intending to live more at quiet. And through his instant labour and especial favour, his chaplain was promoted to the King's service and made his chaplain."[1]

It seems to have been in 1505 or 1506 that Wolsey first came into direct relations with the Court. The ability he had shown at Calais impressed his patron, whose recommendation

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 8–9. The knight's name was Sir Richard Nanfan, and his office at Calais was that of deputy. [See "Letters and Papers of Richard III. and Henry VII." (Roll Series), vol. i. p. 231.] He died January 7, 1506, leaving Wolsey one of his executors.

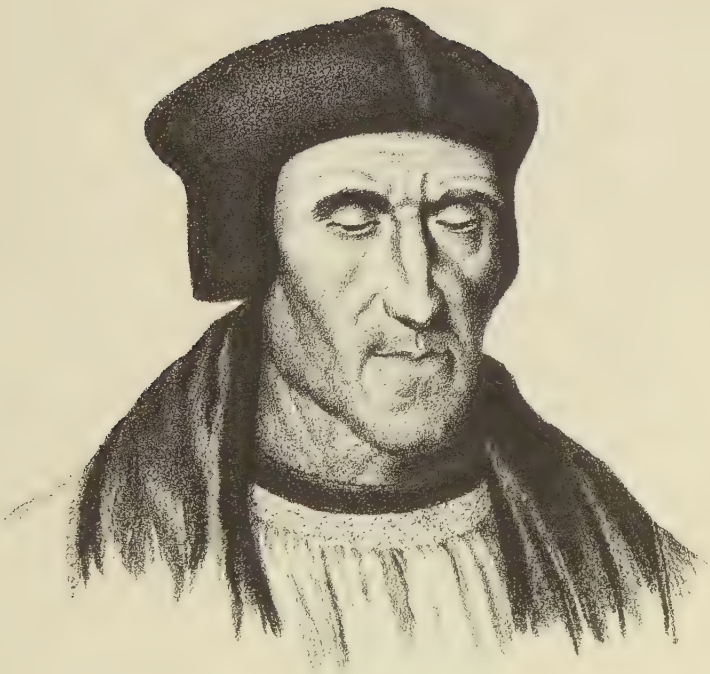
told with the king. Truth to tell, Wolsey was a born administrator; and he knew his powers. There was no false humility about the man. He felt he had it in him—if he had the chance—to serve his country; and so he determined to make the best of any opportunity that presented itself for his advancement. "And many times he used to say, 'If he could get but one foot in the court, he did not doubt but to obtain anything he could wish for.'"

Wolsey has been accused of ambition. Whether he was really so, I leave to the professional moralists; others may consider that he only had a healthy, plain, common sense view of his own capabilities.

He now became one of the King's chaplains and had to say mass before his royal master. And Cavendish tells us: "That done, he spent not the day forth in vain idleness, but gave his attendance upon those whom he thought to bear most rule in the Council and to be most in favour of the King, the which at that time were Doctor Fox, Bishop of Winchester, then Secretary and Lord Privy Seal, and also Sir Thomas Lovell, knight, a very sage counsellor, and witty, being Master of the King's Wards and Constable of the Tower."[1]

Wolsey knew how to choose his friends, and, what is a greater test of a man's ability, how to

[1] "The Reign of Henry VIII.," p. 9.



13. RICHARD FOX, c. 1450—1528.
Bishop of Winchester.
From the Corpus Christi portrait.

keep them. The friendship thus begun at Court with Bishop Fox, one of the worthiest prelates of his age, was of a deep and lasting character; and the old man's admiration for the younger and more able churchman is one of the pleasing sidelights in this history. It effectually does away with the calumnies which have pursued Wolsey in several parts of his career. Such friends as he now secured were quick to recognise his power of mind and grasp of detail. They recommended him to the King as a fitting and trusty messenger for a mission to the Emperor Maximilian concerning Henry's proposed marriage with Margaret of Spain (1507.) How Wolsey went to Flanders, executed his mission, and returned before the King even knew he had started is a story well known. For his services he was made Dean of Lincoln (February 2, 1508), and six days afterwards was presented with a prebend in the same cathedral, which, however, was soon exchanged for another more valuable. He was installed by proxy into the deanery on Lady Day, but not until two years had passed did he personally take possession. Among the preferments showered upon the rising man were the Rectory of Redgrave in Suffolk, by the Benedictine Abbat of St. Edmunds (1506), the Vicarage of Lydd in Kent, by the Cistercian Abbat of Tintern (1508), the post of Royal Almoner (November 3, 1508), and a prebend in Hereford Cathedral (July 1510).

His original benefice of Limington was resigned some time before July 2, 1509.[1]

Henry VII. died on April 22, 1509, and was immediately succeeded by his second and only surviving son, Henry VIII., then a young man of eighteen years of age, and full of promise. Wolsey was, of course, known at Court; but it seems that it was his old pupil, the young Marquis of Dorset, a favourite of the new King, who first introduced him to the particular notice of his royal master.[2] Day by day the King came to appreciate his worth more and more. At Court, where Wolsey was now firmly established, he displayed that "natural dignity of manner or aspect which no art can imitate and which no rule or practice will ever be able to form."[3] "Fashioned to much honour from his cradle," as the dramatist[4] says,

[1] Weaver's "Somerset Incumbents," p. 125.

[2] Campbell's "Lives of the Lord Chancellors," i. p. 445.

[3] Fiddes, p. 10.

[4] The play of "Henry VIII.," known as "The Famous History of the Life of King Henry VIII.," is allowed to be a joint composition of Shakespeare and Fletcher (possibly with the help of a third hand). To Shakespeare is attributed Act i. sc. 1, 2; Act ii. sc. 3, 4; Act iii. sc. 2 (to exit of king); Act v. sc. 1. Thus, it will be seen, all the beautiful passages put into Wolsey's mouth, or his eulogium spoken by Griffith (Act iv. sc. 2) are not Shakespeare's. It would be interesting to compare the character of the Cardinal as given by Shakespeare in a few lines, especially in the trial scene, with that truer and less biassed picture given by Fletcher. The difference may, perhaps, go some way to solve the doubt as to the date of the play. If Shakespeare wrote his part in the time of Elizabeth, only one picture of Wolsey, the opponent of her mother, could be tolerated; but Fletcher, in the time of James I., would have had no such restriction.

Wolsey's Early Years

Wolsey, by his handsome face, majestic figure, and winning expression of countenance, was sure to make his mark. He was graced, too, with "a special gift of natural eloquence, with a filed tongue to express the same, so that he was able to persuade and allure all men to his purpose."[1] In the play of "Henry VIII." we have his character very happily hit off in the following lines :—

> "He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one;
> Exceeding wise, fair spoken and persuading:
> Lofty and sour to them that loved him not,
> But to those that sought him sweet as summer.
> And though he was unsatisfied in getting,
> Which was a sin, yet in bestowing, madam,
> He was most princely."[2]

The first preferment he seems to have had directly from his new master was on November 27, 1510, when he was presented to the parish church of Great Torrington, in the diocese of Exeter;[3] the next year saw him Registrar of the Most Noble Order of the Garter; and by February 17, 1511, he was Canon and Prebendary of St. George's Chapel at Windsor.[4] On January 16, 1512, Cardinal Bainbridge, then in Rome, made him a prebendary in York Cathedral. Nine months after, through the good offices of Bishop Fox and the Earl of Shrewsbury, the deanery of the

[1] Cavendish, pp. 21–22.
[2] Act iv. sc. 2.
[3] Brewer, i. n. 1359.
[4] Rymer's "Foedera," xiii. 293.

Collegiate Church of St. Stephen's, in Westminster Palace, was Wolsey's; and on February 19, 1513, he also became Dean of York, and received the rich benefice of the precentorship of St. Paul's Cathedral. Henry appointed him Bishop of Tournai, but before taking possession of the see, the diocese of Lincoln became vacant early in 1514 by the death of William Smith. The yearly income of that see was £896, 18s., which equals in money of today considerably more than £10,000. The Bull for Wolsey's appointment to Lincoln was issued by Leo X.,[1] and is dated Feb. 6, 1514;[2] and on the following day the Pope wrote to the King (who had asked that the heavy fees demanded by the officials for the expedition of Bulls might, in part, be remitted in this case) that he could not comply with the request, for the College

[1] Leo X. succeeded Julius II. in 1513. John de' Medici was born in 1475, and began his clerical career at the ripe age of seven years. He was nominated Cardinal-deacon in 1488, being then but thirteen. He was only in deacon's orders when elected Pope. Of his brilliant pontificate, his patronage of art and literature, it is not necessary to speak, but, as an ecclesiastical ruler, he was uncertain. His most successful act was the *concordat* with France in 1517, in which, while ignoring the rights of election, the power was divided between Pope and King. But the concessions made by Leo probably saved France to the Church. His management at the beginning of the Reformation was fickle and uncertain. He did not seem to realise either the real state in Germany nor the cause of complaint that existed. He suffered much from the difficulties of reconciling his temporal interests with those of his spiritual position. He enters most directly into English history as having created Wolsey Cardinal and Henry VIII. *Defender of the Faith.*

[2] Rymer's "Foedera," xiii. 390.

16. LEO X., 1475—1521.
From a picture by Raphael.
The figure by the chair is his nephew, afterwards Clement VII.

of Cardinals had rejected it as detrimental to the Holy See.[1] It was on the occasion of this appointment to Lincoln that Wolsey first appears to have come in contact with Giulio, Cardinal de' Medici, afterwards Clement VII.,[2] who wrote a special letter to say how he rejoiced to hear of Wolsey's elevation to the Episcopacy. The Elect of Lincoln was evidently looked upon as a rising man, and one worth cultivating; for the opinion at Rome was still, as one of the popes is reported to have said, that "truly England is our storehouse of delights, a very inexhaustible well; and where much abounds much can be extorted from many."[3] A letter of Silvestro Gigli,[4] the English agent in Rome, throws a

[1] Brewer, i. n. 4724.

[2] Giulio de' Medici was cousin to Leo X., and was born in 1478, and, it is asserted, was an illegitimate son. He was destined for a civil career, but Leo X., immediately after his election, made him enter the ecclesiastical state, and on the very day of his coronation appointed him Archbishop of Florence, and shortly afterwards made him Cardinal. Giulio had nothing of the great talents of Leo X., and when he came to the pontificate, in his feeble hands the barque of Peter was very nearly shipwrecked. Sufficient indications of his character and the calamities which befell him will be given in the text. It cannot be disputed that he had to drink to the dregs the bitter cup prepared for him by his predecessor. So far he was the victim of his age.

[3] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora* (Roll Series), iv. pp. 546–47.

[4] Silvestro Gigli (1463–1521) was Bishop of Worcester, and was resident ambassador at Rome of Henry VII., he was again appointed ambassador by Henry VIII. When Cardinal Bainbridge was poisoned in Rome (1514), Gigli, who was not on good terms with him, was suspected of the murder, but he was acquitted. Wolsey always stood his friend, and kept him at Rome as his confidential agent.

light upon matters concerning this appointment. Writing February 11, 1514, to Wolsey, he says: "The Consistory would not listen to the application (for the diminution of the *annates*), saying that the church (of Lincoln) was very rich, and had always paid the tax. The Pope, whose portion amounts to 1700, asserted he had nothing except *annates* for his support, as he received nothing from . . . as his predecessor did, and is greatly in debt, especially for his coronation and his intolerable daily expenses. . . . The Pope, however, will forego the *annates* for the deanery of St. Stephen's. The expediting of the Bulls amount to 6821 ducats 10 cat. The officials are angry with him for having brought it down so low."[1]

Wolsey was consecrated on March 26, 1514, by William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and at once gave up most of his other benefices. But he was never enthroned in his cathedral, nor did he personally visit it, for within a few months Cardinal Bainbridge, Archbishop of York, was poisoned in Rome, and the new Bishop of Lincoln was, by August 5, Elect of York.[2] Thus in one year three bishoprics fell upon Wolsey. The election to York meant more Bulls, and consequently more money to the officials. Wolsey

[1] Brewer, i. n. 4747. The sum comes to about £17,496 in modern value.

[2] Rymer, xiii. 411.

had to enter into a bond (August 18, 1514) with Anthony de Vivaldis, of Genoa, W. Botry, mercer, and Thomas Raymond, grocer, of London, whereby they engaged to pay for Wolsey's Pall and the expenses of his promotion in the Court of Rome, the sum of £2000,[1] an enormous sum when compared with the present value of money. In due course, after the fees were paid, the Pope issued the Bulls (September 15, 1514) and sent the Pall as the sign of archiepiscopal jurisdiction.[2]

[1] Brewer, i. n. 5334.
[2] Rymer, xiii. 450.

CHAPTER III

CARDINAL AND LEGATE

The first negotiations for the Hat—Polydore Vergil at work—Leo entertains the idea—Wolsey's plans for reformation—Henry VIII. and the Cardinalate—Wolsey his dearest friend—Leo demurs—The real reason—The *Curia* fear for their influence—The "barbarians" will want a Legate—A reform of abuses dreaded at Rome—Pastor on the abuses of the Italians—Wolsey hated and feared at Rome—His duty to England imperative—The only argument—Leo X. dislikes Wolsey—Shifts and expedients—Politics influence the Pope—The French King invades Italy—The "King's Grace" marvels at the delay—Leo gives way—Summons a consistory—Creates Wolsey Cardinal—*S.D.N. Scutifer*—Wolsey asks to be made Legate—A visitation of monasteries—*Legatus a latere*—No vulgar love of power—A work to be done—Leo's political shifts—England and Rome—Wolsey's overtures rejected at Rome—Leo driven mad with fear—His feelings against Wolsey—Lord Chancellor of England—Wolsey and Warham—No rivalry between the two—The building of St. Peter's at Rome—Negotiation for percentage—Leo's pecuniary difficulties—Proposes to send a Legate to England—Wolsey's chance—Henry refuses to allow a Legate unless Wolsey becomes one—Campeggio—Wolsey conqueror—His ecclesiastical power now supreme.

But already, while Bishop of Lincoln, Wolsey was interested in the negotiations Henry had begun at Rome to secure the Cardinal's hat for his minister. Polydore Vergil,[1] the sub-collector of

[1] Polydore Vergil [*circa* 1470–1555] was chamberlain to Alexander VI. He came to England as sub-collector of Papal dues in 1509, and received many preferments in this country. He was a

papal dues in England, wrote (May 21, 1514) to tell him that, on returning to Rome, he had sounded Cardinal Adrian de Castello, who was also Bishop of Bath and Wells, and asked him to use his influence with the Pope to secure his elevation to the cardinalate. Leo thought, if Wolsey had great authority with the King, such a promotion might be expedient. The matter was so to be arranged that it would appear to be the spontaneous proposition of the Pope.[1] From this letter, if Polydore Vergil can be trusted, it would seem that Henry did not yet know of the proposal, which appears in the first place to have emanated from Wolsey himself. Nor is this at all unlikely. The position of a Cardinal would help greatly the plans Wolsey had already seen necessary for a reformation of the Church. Though sure of the Pall of York, yet Wolsey, as Archbishop, would not be the highest ecclesiastical authority in England. The red hat would set him above Warham of Canterbury, and, so far, would serve the purpose he had in view. It was not long before Henry himself saw the advisability of the promotion.

friend of Fox, More, Pace, Linacre, Tunstall, and Latimer. He fell foul of Wolsey, and was charged with vilifying him and with forging dispensations. He was imprisoned, and Leo X., Giulio de' Medici, and others petitioned for his release. He was released, but lost his sub-collectorship. He became a determined enemy of Wolsey, and in his History gives play to his animosity. Where his personal spite does not enter, Vergil may be looked upon as an historian with advanced and modern views.

[1] Brewer, i. n. 5110.

He wrote (August 12, 1514) to Leo, requesting that Wolsey should be raised to the cardinalate, and bore witness that he esteemed the Elect of York above all his dearest friends, and could do nothing of the least importance without him.[1]

Leo wrote to Henry (September 24, 1514) in reply, saying the honour desired for Wolsey was surrounded with difficulties; it was much desired, and admitted the bearer at once to the highest rank; he promised, however, to comply with the King's wishes at a suitable time.[2] What some of the difficulties were may be gathered from the diary of De Grassis, Papal Master of Ceremonies, who writes: "Men say that an English Cardinal ought not to be created lightly, because the English behave themselves insolently in their dignity, as was shown in the case of Cardinal Bainbridge, just dead. Moreover, as Wolsey is the intimate friend of the King, he will not be content with the cardinalate alone, but, as is the custom for those barbarians, will wish to have the office of Legate over all England. If this is granted the influence of the Roman *Curia* will be at an end; if it be not granted, the Cardinal will be the Pope's enemy, and will favour France."[3]

Already it seems to have been known in Rome that Wolsey, though a "barbarian," was a man

[1] Brewer, i. n. 5318.
[2] Ibid., n. 5445.
[3] Quoted in Bishop Creighton's "Wolsey," pp. 34–40.

who had the strength of his convictions, and was able, if need be, to take up a position not agreeable to the worldly traditions then ruling the *Curia*. What they dreaded above all things was a reform of abuses, which were profitable. Pastor, in his "History of the Popes," does not hesitate to say that it was the Italians, whose incomes in great part depended on abuses, who, like a leaden weight, impeded every movement in the direction of reform ;[1] and he quotes the German Carthusian, Jacob von Jüterbogk, as saying that "no nation in Christendom offers such opposition to reform as Italy, and this from love of gain and worldly profit and fear of losing its privileges."[2]

What was common opinion on the Continent was also in men's minds in England. Wolsey realised the state of affairs perfectly well, and he had a clear vision of what the future was bound to be unless a remedy was found and applied. He knew well that he was hated and feared by the *Curia;* but this did not prevent him from insisting firmly on the cardinalate. His duty to his native country was imperative ; that, at least, he might try to save from the dangers threatening the Continent ; therefore the interests of Religion in England were to him the first thing to be safeguarded. He knew the character and mind of the men he had to deal with—he also knew the point at which their interests and his would

[1] Vol. ii. p. 48. [2] Ibid.

be found to coincide And of this he made use. If nothing could be done at Rome, in those days, without bribery, small blame to him if he had recourse, and free recourse too, to the prevalent method.

Leo X., who had a personal dislike against the great Archbishop, tried to compromise. How would it be if Wolsey were made Cardinal, and lived in Rome in place of Bainbridge?[1] This would put a stop at any rate to Wolsey's projects for England that were inconvenient. When this proposal failed, an offer was made that Wolsey should receive a Bull of promotion on condition he did not carry the *insignia* publicly. But these shifts would not serve. At last, according to Gigli (April 25, 1515), Leo asserted that the promotion could not take place for the present without the gravest scandal.[2]

Meanwhile political necessity was making the Pope change his mind. The French king, Francis, threatened an invasion of Italy ; and Henry's help was now sorely needed. Leo, moreover, had been informed (July 1515) that "the King's Grace marvelled that he delayed so long the sending of the red hat, seeing how tenderly, instantly, and often His Grace had written to His Holiness for the same." And Wolsey, taking advantage of the situation, sent warning that if

[1] *Pace to Wolsey*, Ellis's "Original Letters," iii. 1, 178.
[2] Brewer, ii. n. 374.

7. HAMPTON COURT.
Gateway of the Second Court, with Wolsey's arms.

the King forsake the Pope he will be in greater "danger on this day two years than ever was Pope J[ulius]."[1]

Francis was already at Milan. The danger was imminent. At the beginning of August Wolsey knew the Pope was giving way. Early in September news came from Rome that "the Pope was so on fire that he will insist on his promotion in spite of all the Cardinals," whom he had summoned from their vacations for a consistory.[2] At last, on September 10th, Leo X. notified to Wolsey that the creation had taken place; and in ten days a royal courier arrived in London with the important document.[3] The Cardinal's hat, with a valuable ring, was sent over in the care of Boniface Collis, "S.D.N. Scutifer," and secretary to Gigli. With extraordinary pomp and splendour Wolsey received at Westminster Abbey, on November 8th, the *insignia* of his new dignity, together with the title of St. Cecilia beyond the Tiber.

So far, Wolsey had succeeded. He had been set in a position which now gave him honorary precedence over the Primatial Chair of Canterbury. But, in order to carry out what he may have already planned, a greater position and powers more ample were needed. His master-

[1] Brewer, ii. n. 763.
[2] Ibid., n. 887.
[3] R. Brown's "Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII.," i. p. 128.

mind had seen the disease, and it also saw that the remedy must be applied by one man. He was the one man in England capable of carrying out the work, by his genius, power, and energy. So no sooner did he know that the Pope had consented to create him Cardinal than at once he applied to be made Legate of the Holy See. If Leo X. made difficulties, Wolsey instructed his agent to press at least for faculties to hold a visitation over monasteries, even such as were exempt from the control of the Ordinary. As *Legatus a latere*, he would supersede in authority even Canterbury, the Primate of all England and *Legatus natus*. This meant that he would have visitatorial powers over such bodies as the Cistercians, White Canons, and all the Friars. The Augustinians and the Benedictine Monks were, with about half-a-dozen exceptions, not exempt.

We do not think it was mere vulgar love of power which animated the Cardinal. He saw a work was to be done; and to do it he must be unrestricted except by conscience. Ecclesiastical dignities were of value to him, perhaps, principally as so many means of advancing the end in view. For instance, how highly he esteemed the cardinalate is shown when he said to the Venetian ambassador (January 2, 1516): "We would prefer not being honoured with the dignity rather than do what is unworthy of it."[1]

[1] "Calendar of Venetian State Papers," ii. p. 275.

Cardinal and Legate

Meanwhile Leo's dislike of Wolsey increased. In the Spanish State Papers of the period we have reports of the Imperial Ambassador at Rome, in which we catch glimpses of the political difficulty in which the Pope found himself. Writing June 13, 1520, Juan Manuel says: "The statesmen in Rome are persuaded that the Cardinal will do what is most lucrative for himself"; and he recounts how the Pope had said to him: "The Cardinal, who is the governor of the King of England, is a very strange person, and makes the King go hither and thither just as he likes."[1] This is in such direct opposition to all the facts of the relations between Wolsey and Henry, as they are now disclosed to us, that we can well suppose that there was no one in Rome in those days who understood the position of the Church in England. England has always been a puzzle to Rome. Writing again on July 5, 1520, the Ambassador refers to the Pope's dislike to Wolsey: "Although there is no man on the face of the earth whom His Holiness detests so heartily as the Cardinal, he will be constituted Legate, if the Pope is given to understand that in no other way can he get out of the difficulties in which he is placed."[2] On the same day he writes again: "The Cardinal of England is much disliked at Rome."[3] And the endeavours of

[1] Bergenroth's "Spanish State Papers," ii. p. 307
[2] Ibid., ii. p. 309. [3] Ibid.

Wolsey to persuade the Pope to send him a commission empowering him to reconcile the Holy Father with all Christian princes, did not even get a civil answer.[1]

Leo, "driven almost mad by fear," and reputed to be "very fickle in ecclesiastical matters" but "very constant in political affairs,"[2] now gave himself over to be ruled in all matters ecclesiastical and political by the Emperor on condition that his enemies, the French, were attacked.[3] He had no true desire for peace, for he was aware if the negotiations then proceeding at Calais came to anything, the Church,[4] his person, and the Medici family would be exposed to the attacks of France. He was determined, so he said, to spend as much as he had, and even more, to prevent the Emperor from being so grossly imposed upon and abused in his dignity by the Cardinal of England;[5] and in his fear suggested that some one should show Henry what sort of person Wolsey really was.[6]

With such feelings against the Cardinal, it is no wonder that Leo for a long time demurred granting the legateship. The one thing which did not seem to enter at all into consideration was whether the legateship would be to the ad-

[1] Bergenroth, ii. p. 310. [2] Ibid., pp. 330, 313.
[3] Ibid., p. 311.
[4] That is, of course, the local Church of Rome.
[5] Bergenroth, ii. p. 375. [6] Ibid., p. 377.

14. WILLIAM WARHAM, c. 1460—1532.
Archbishop of Canterbury.
From Holbein's portrait.

vantage of the Church in England. His thought was how to play off the Emperor against his enemies the French, and how the legateship might be made useful as a means of securing a political advantage. While the Pope thus hesitated, Wolsey was increasing his power by receiving on Christmas Eve, 1515, at the King's express command, the Great Seal of England, in succession to Warham, who of his own accord resigned the charge. It has been insinuated that a rivalry existed between these two illustrious men. We have not been able to find any real grounds for such a statement; on the contrary, Warham, an old man and wearied of secular employment, might well have been only too glad to retire to a scholarly retreat and to the spiritual duties of his Primacy. From the documents remaining we can see the excellent and more than friendly terms on which they mutually stood. The new position Wolsey had gained, and which awaited him in the near future, made him in law supreme; but, if in asserting his authority, as he was obliged to do, official difficulties arose, they were settled easily and without breach of friendship. Naturally there were many officious friends of Warham's, or rather enemies of Wolsey, who did their best to set one Archbishop against the other, but without success. Each was too great-minded to bear jealousy. If at times the older prelate doubted or hesitated to accept the more energetic

doings of the younger man, this was only in the nature of things.

Leo X. still held back about the legateship. In November 1517 Wolsey received a Bull relating to the building of St. Peter's and the appointment of a banker for the money received by preaching the indulgences offered. Warham and the Bishop of St. David's were appointed Papal Commissioners for this purpose.[1] Henry, however, felt that he ought to have some word in the business. His course was easy. The publication of the indulgences was not allowed unless a commission on the money gathered was paid into the royal treasury. In this he was following the practice of other countries. Negotiations began. Leo was willing that Henry should have one-fourth of the proceeds. But Wolsey stood out for one-third, and successfully. Whether the proceeds of this sale of indulgences, which caused Luther's protest, were entirely devoted to the building of St. Peter's, seems somewhat uncertain, for the Pope at that very time was in great pecuniary difficulties. Five days after the issue of the Bull to Wolsey, Leo wrote (November 6, 1517) to tell Warham that he had on various occasions called the King's attention to the expenses of the Papal See and the debts incurred by the frequent wars ; he therefore expresses the hope that the English Clergy

[1] Brewer, ii. n. 3768.

would comply with the request shortly to be laid before them for a subsidy to the Holy See.[1] The Pope then announces his intention of sending a Legate to England on the ostensible business of raising funds for an expedition against the Turks, and for establishing a five years' truce between Christian princes. This was Wolsey's opportunity. According to English custom no Legate could come into the country without the king's consent and express knowledge of the limits of the legation. Henry promptly refused to allow the Legate to enter England unless Wolsey was joined in the legateship, and, indeed, made First Legate. After much dispute this was agreed to, and on May 17, 1518, the Pope wrote to Wolsey announcing that Cardinal Campeggio[2] was coming, and that Wolsey was associated with him in the legation.[3] Three days after, Wolsey's faithful agent, Gigli, notified that his master was

[1] Brewer, ii. n. 3776.

[2] Lorenzo Campeggio (1472–1539), who figures largely in the life of Wolsey, was born at Bologna of a noble family. Early in life he married, it is said, and had five children, one of whom became a Cardinal, another Bishop of Majorca, while a third held a high military post at Venice. In 1510, being already known as a great canonist, he joined the ecclesiastical ranks. For his political services he received abundant preferments, and held many bishoprics as reward from both Pope and Spanish Kings. He was made Cardinal 1517, and by papal provision became Bishop of Salisbury in 1524, but was deprived of this see, as non-resident, by an Act of Parliament in 1534. Being besieged in the castle of St. Angelo with Clement VII., he had the fear of Spain ever before his eyes.

[3] Rymer, xiii. 606.

appointed First Legate. Campeggio, who by Wolsey's orders had been detained at Calais until the Pope had become amenable, and certain stipulations were carried out, arrived in England on July 23, 1518, and Wolsey entered upon his legateship. In the following month he received from Rome a Bull empowering him to visit the monasteries and other religious houses. His power ecclesiastical was now supreme, and he had all the force of the State to aid him in carrying out the work he had set himself to do.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROJECT OF REFORM

Wolsey's aim—The cause of the alarm—The effects of the Renascence — The English Church — Need of an educated clergy — Wolsey's measures—He tries to get the legateship extended — Leo refuses — His extraordinary reason —He yields—Henry VIII. and the legateship—Wolsey the Reformer— The need and hope of a reformation—Canon Dixon on the need — How Fox of Winchester regarded Wolsey's projects—An admirable letter—A great hope—His proposed scheme—Had Wolsey been Pope !

We can now see the great aim Wolsey had in view when he demanded the legateship; and we can also realise the alarm that had existed. The Cardinal had gathered up power into his own hands in order to bring about a general reformation in the English Church. He was fully alive to the necessity of the day. The Renascence had brought in a new spirit; and he had seen its effects in Italy, where the supineness of prominent Churchmen had allowed it to drift away from Christianity. At all costs England was to be saved from such a misfortune. He saw that the English Church, to do its work, must rise to a consciousness of the times, for the torrent of new life then rolling through men's intellects was too mighty a force

to be dammed. A wary and skilful hand, instead of allowing the movement to sap the foundations of Faith and Morality, might turn it to the good of Religion itself. But in order to do so, there was needed a Clergy well educated and trained, and one able to help the current of thought and develop what was good therein. Such and no less was the object the Cardinal planned and worked for; and the measure of success he met with, before his downfall, was obtained in spite of the obstacles arising in quarters which should rather have helped on such efforts for the good of Religion. To do the work Wolsey set before him required time. It was necessarily a slow process, for it would have to be an educational measure, and such is not the work of a day nor a year.

He knew that at any moment his power might be destroyed by the withdrawal of his legatine faculties. They had been given unwillingly and under compulsion, and any pretext might be eagerly seized upon to recall them. Therefore we find Wolsey (March 25, 1519) writing to his agent in Rome, instructing him to ask that when Campeggio leaves, the legateship may be retained with increased faculties. The power was asked for, not for extorting money, but for effecting reforms among the clergy and doing some good in the Lord's vineyard.[1] But Leo X. was in no

[1] Martene, *Collectio Veterum Scriptorum*, iii. p. 1289.

8. HAMPTON COURT.
Carpenter's Court.

humour to grant this. It was carnival time, and he refused to be disturbed. He put off the matter of reforming the Clergy on the specious plea that it would supersede the authority of the Bishops. But he puts forward other reasons for his refusal at this juncture. Rome, said he, had not received any equivalent for granting such an extraordinary power. Moreover, the Pope was sore that he had not yet received the oft-promised subsidy.[1] This was one of the obstacles to reform. But eventually Leo consented to grant an extension of the legatine authority for three years, and it was subsequently renewed for varying periods by Leo X. and Hadrian VI., and at last confirmed for life by Clement VII. In writing to thank Leo X., the King says (January 20, 1520) that he was sorry the Pope could not grant the extension of the legatine authority for an indefinite period, as it would have enabled the clergy to accept with greater alacrity their reformation.[2]

It is as an ecclesiastical Reformer that Wolsey owes his title of a great Churchman; and this aspect of his character has been strangely neglected by historians or only alluded to in the most casual way. And yet it seems certain, as far as one can judge, that what Wolsey planned and executed would, by removing the causes,

[1] Brewer, iii. n. 149.
[2] Martene, *op cit.*, iii. p. 1305.

have saved England from the religious disputes of the later years had there not intervened that fatal question of the Divorce with all its side issues. Canon Dixon, in his "History of the English Church," but too truly remarks: "A clerical reformation, a reformation without meddling with the Catholic faith, had been attempted already by the best sort of the clergy throughout Europe. Three great councils had been held to bring it about within the last hundred years, and to each of these councils England had sent representatives. The defeat of this attempted reformation by councils, which was effected by the intrigues of Rome, above all by the skill of the last of the great popes, Martin V., is the most mournful event of modern history. It caused despair; it gave weight to the clamours that no reformation was to be expected from the Church herself; and thus it opened the way for the invasion of the temporal power and for the doctrinal revolution which presently overswept Europe."[1]

How Wolsey's intention of effecting a reformation of discipline was regarded by such a prelate as Fox of Winchester can be gathered from the following letter,[2] written in reply to an official notice of a legatine reformation :—

[1] Vol. i. pp. 23, 24.

[2] The original is in Latin, and is given in Fiddes's "Collections," p. 85.

The Project of Reform

"Great was the contentment and joy, most reverend Father, which I received from your recent letter which tells me that your Grace is set upon reforming the whole body of the Clergy, and that you have notified and fixed a day on which the work shall begin and be proceeded with. This day I have truly longed for, even as Simeon in the Gospel desired to see the Messiah, the Expected of men. And on reading your Grace's letter I see before me a more entire and whole reformation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the English people than I could have expected or ever hoped to see completed or even so much as attempted in this age. As in duty bound, I indeed did strive to carry out within the limits of my small jurisdiction, that same design which your Grace will soon bring about in the two provinces of this realm. For three years this great affair has been the object of my studies, labours, watchings, and travail, till I found out what had hitherto escaped me—viz., that everything belonging to the primitive integrity of the Clergy, and especially to the monastic state, is perverted either by dispensations or corruptions, or else has become obsolete from age or depraved owing to the iniquity of the times. As age was creeping on me, while the thought of this increased my will and desire, so all hope departed of seeing a revival, even in my own diocese. But I now have here in your Grace's

most welcome letter, an assured hope and full expectation of seeing a reformation entire and public. For I am sure, after frequent experience, that whatever your Grace may design or undertake, as it will be wisely concerted, even so will it be accomplished prudently and resolutely without difficulty or delay. By your great skill in business, whether divine or human, by extraordinary favour and credit, with our Sovereign lord the King and his Holiness the Pope, an advantage your Grace has ever improved, you have gained the greatest renown in the whole world; as Legate you have composed the differences between Christian princes and have settled peace, and now you are determined to employ your power in reforming and settling the ecclesiastical state and discipline. By this you will gain true and immortal honour from God and posterity, and will have a name as far beyond that of any other papal legate, as peace is more desirable than war, or the Clergy more holy and reverend than the Lay-folk. For if, while the names of several legates are forgotten, those two[1] (whose decrees were only drawn up and left imperfect by their early return to Rome) are still justly remembered and esteemed, neither Time nor Envy will erase or dim the lustre and renown of your Grace's name who is going to restore the Clergy and Religious of England to dignity and integrity and

[1] Otto in 1236 and Ottoboni in 1268.

to enact laws, confirmed and recommended by careful and conscientious observance, for their safety and stability.

"Your Grace will have less difficulty and more success in carrying out this business as our most Christian King, who has (as I think) exhorted, encouraged, and advised you to undertake the task, will lend his authority and help in your godly desires; and the Prelates, especially the Bishops, will concur heartily by their best endeavours. As far as I can see this reformation of the Clergy and Religious will so abate the calumnies of the Laity, so advance the honour of the Clergy, and so reconcile our sovereign lord the King and his nobility to them and be the most acceptable of all sacrifices to God, that I intend to devote to its furtherance the few remaining years of my life. This I shall more openly declare to your Grace on the day appointed by your letters, if so be that I am living and well. Meanwhile during life I shall daily and constantly pray in my mass, that our good God may keep your Grace and further all your projects both happily and prosperously."

This letter of the aged bishop shows the high hopes that Wolsey's legateship inspired in those who had the true interests of the Church at heart. "In their eyes it appeared to be a supreme effort to carry out the clerical reformation. The extraordinary power of a Legate exercised by an

Englishman and always limited by the supreme power of the Crown, was not repulsive to the nation."[1] We have also a proof of the genuine interest Henry VIII. then took in the welfare of the Church. It makes one regret more and more that a monarch, in so many ways right-minded, should have been allowed to fall into an attitude opposed to the real interests of the Church he had desired to serve.

As far as we can gather from what he did, Wolsey's scheme of Reformation was laid on the following lines. He proposed—

(1) To hold a general visitation of the monasteries and of the whole clerical body by an authority which could not be gainsaid. The purpose of this visitation was to restore sound discipline and morals; and to enforce the fulfilment of the duties of each state.

(2) To provide for the clergy the means of higher education, both in colleges and universities.

(3) To found new bishoprics in the larger towns.

(4) To guard the nation against the New Learning in Religion by making their faith a reasonable service by means of the solid work of education.

The great work he set before himself in England he aspired also to do for the world at large by means of the Papacy. If in that hour of the Church's need the clear-minded and far-seeing

[1] Dixon, *op. cit.*, i. p. 28.

Wolsey had sat in St. Peter's chair and had ruthlessly set his knife to cut away the abuses that were stifling life, might not the religious history of Europe have been a brighter page? But out of corruption comes life: and in this way God's overreaching hand is shown even while He makes us take the responsibilities of our own actions, and bear to the full their effects.

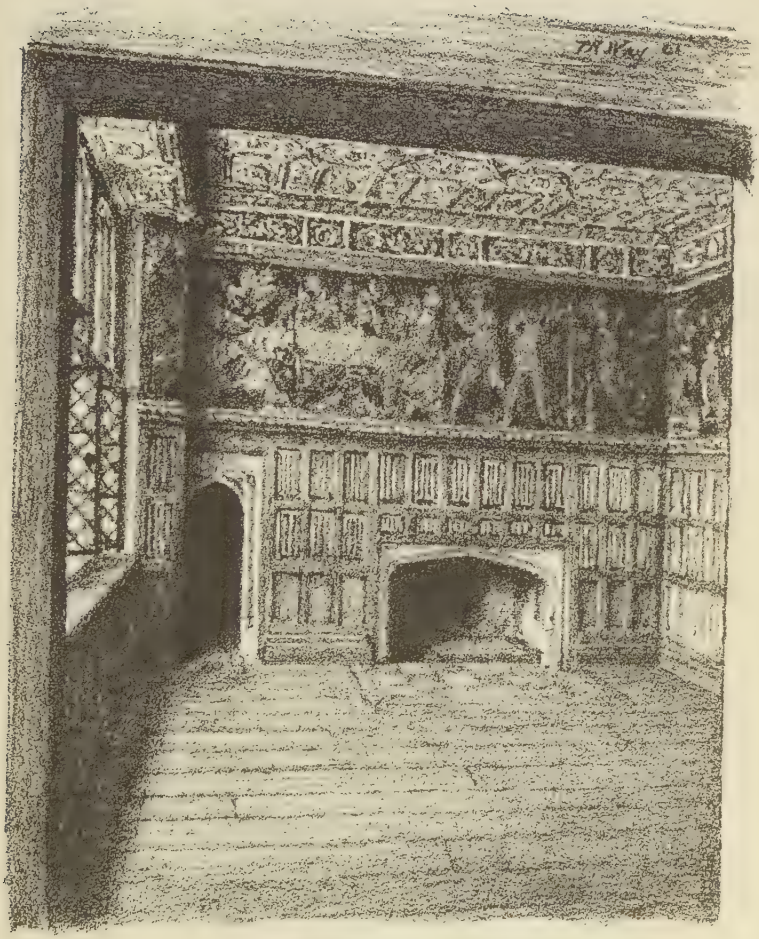
We must now proceed to investigate Wolsey's work of Reformation; and, for convenience' sake, we will follow the plan he seems to have made.

CHAPTER V

REFORMING THE ENGLISH CHURCH

"Reformation" a bad-sounding word—It does not connote immorality—Need for reform—A natural effect—Human nature—The Black Death—The Civil Wars—Reforming the Religious—The English Benedictines—The Augustinians or Black Canons—The various existing bodies of monks and friars—Wolsey and the Benedictines—A Tudor tradition—Their trust in him—The visitation of the monasteries—His address to the religious orders—Visits Westminster Abbey—Wolsey and the Augustinians—The *Bulla Benedictina*—His regulations—Plain-song to be used—Appoints the new Abbat of Glaston—Richard Whiting an excellent choice—Appoints other superiors—The Abbess of Wilton—The Abbats of Hyde and of Peterborough—Summons a General Chapter of the Black Monks—Other Legates and the monks—The question of perpetual abstinence—Wolsey draws up constitutions for the monks—The reply of the monks—Abbat Kyderminstre—Commissions other bishops to hold visitations—The smaller houses of women—Bromehall Priory—Wolsey Legate for life—The Friars—The Dominicans accept the visitation—The Grey Friars raise an outcry—Rome and the Friars—Conventuals and Observants—Clement VII. fears them—The Cardinal Protector of the order—The Friars "desperate beasts"—Wolsey's firmness—The Friars' resistance—Their action in the Divorce—Reforming the clergy—Constitution for the diocese of York—Religious instruction provided for—The National Visitation—Warham tries to be beforehand—Wolsey asserts his prerogative—A Legatine Synod—Obstacles in Wolsey's way—Hadrian VI.'s confidence in Wolsey—Wolsey and the clergy—Masses of the Holy Ghost—A *Laudator temporis acti*—Visitation of St. Paul's—Wolsey and the Bishops—The statutes of Lichfield—Reforms of the spiritual courts—How Wolsey proposed to reform the clergy.

To touch the Clergy and Religious, or to speak of "Reform" in connection with these bodies, is always an invidious task; for, to the ordinary



6. HAMPTON COURT.
One of Wolsey's rooms.

reader, the word "Reformation" at once connotes immorality, whereas such a conclusion is unwarranted by a knowledge of the whole case. Clergy and Religious, from the very fact that they pledge themselves to a closer following of the Divine Model, and undertake to be the teachers and pastors of others, may stand in need of a reformation to bring them back to the standard of their vocation; and yet, such a reformation does not in any way necessarily imply that there is anything against them on the score of morals. The obligations of the Decalogue bind all; those who aspire to the higher life undertake special responsibilities and add something beyond the Ten Commandments, and it is concerning these additions that reformation is generally concerned. Moreover, it may also happen very easily that highly organised bodies, jealous for privileges granted in the course of ages, are content, perhaps too content, to enjoy them while shirking the responsibilities they bring. They may easily cling to the letter, and leave the spirit to take care of itself. All such bodies are in danger of an excess of conservatism; and the closer the bond binding the members, the more do they suffer from the abuse of the *esprit de corps*. To bring such bodies up to the needs of the present moment requires a strong and firm hand, and yet one who will not forget human nature. But he who sets his hand to the work

is sure to be unpopular with those whose repose has been troubled. It is no wonder, then, that from time to time both Clergy and Religious needed reformation. The visitation of the Black Death, and the unsettled state of the country owing to the Civil Wars, had made their effects felt deeply in the body ecclesiastic. The loosening of many obligations which the troublesome times had caused was met in another direction by the New Life then throbbing through Europe, and these two forces made the need of a wise reformation imperative.

Our attention must be first directed to the religious bodies. We find two great divisions. The first comprised the Benedictines and the Augustinians; each, as a body, managed their own affairs, and had no superior out of England saving the Pope. This was the normal Benedictine constitution, and was followed by the Augustinians or Black Canons from their institution in the eleventh century. In the second great division were the large body of Friars—Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, Carmelites, and others less numerous, along with the Cistercians, Cluniacs, and White Canons. All these were exempt from Episcopal control; and some of them, notably the Friars, were under the jurisdiction of foreign superiors.

It was natural that Wolsey should have turned his attention to the Benedictines, quite apart

from their importance in the English Church. The Tudor family from the beginning, as shown by the repeated action of Henry VII., had been in close relations with them; and by making foundations for additional monks on the condition that students at the universities should also be increased, had clearly shown that they, at least, expected the ancient Order would rise to the needs of the day. Henry VII. was not a man to throw away his money. The proof of the reality of Wolsey's interest was that the Benedictines showed that they too had confidence in him, for in several cases they put into his hands the election of abbats. As Legate he had the rights of visitation over all their houses, even over the few (six at most) which were removed from episcopal jurisdiction.

According to Polydore Vergil[1] in 1518, that is, as soon as Wolsey became Legate, he summoned all the various religious orders before him, and, after expressing his goodwill towards them, spoke very plainly of their defects, and of the desire he had to see them live according to their rules and, together with good works, attend more to a literary education. He announced his intention of taking their reformation in hand himself, lest their orders should become extinct. In accordance with this warning he made that same year a visit to the royal abbey at West-

[1] "Anglicæ Historiæ," Libri xxvii. (ed. 1555), p. 657.

minster, and, says Polydore Vergil (who, however, is not to be trusted, either when praising or blaming the Cardinal), treated the monks with considerable rigour. His special visit to Westminster, from the fact of his going there at once, and not proceeding till some five years later with his visitation of the rest of the Order, shows that it is not impossible that that monastery required some special measures. The proximity of the Court is not commonly favourable to the religious life; and then Westminster was also an exempt house. But Polydore Vergil's words need not be taken too literally when he says:—

"De statu monachorum severe cognoscit, intemperanterque omnia agit, miscet, turbat, ut terreat cæteros, ut imperium ostendat, ut se terribiliorem præbeat."

In the year 1519 the Legate began the work of reforming the Augustinians. For a long time they had formed themselves into a Congregation on the same lines as the English Benedictine Congregation which issued from the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). Wolsey takes bodily the greater part of his Augustinian reform from the famous *Bulla Benedictina* of Benedict XII. (1334). He added, however, some regulations of his own. One on the divine service is worth quoting. After saying that the Office was to be said neither too quickly nor too slowly, and that each one was to be present at the services,

1. THE GATEWAY TO WOLSEY'S PALACE, YORK PLACE (afterwards known as White-hall).

especially at matins and the conventual mass, the Cardinal enacts: "And with all ecclesiastics, and especially religious, that method of singing is divinely appointed which is not intended to gratify the ears of those present by the levity of its rhythm, nor to court the approval of worldlings by the multiplicity of its notes. But that which is Plain-Song raises the minds of the singers and the hearts of the hearers to heavenly things." Therefore Plain-Song is to be used, and *cantus fractus vel divisus*, called "Prick-Song," is forbidden except at the Lady-Mass and such-like non-conventual offices at which lay singers are allowed in most religious houses. On Sundays and feast days the religious, if they can do it themselves, may use some simple melodies at mass and vespers, provided that all the words be sung and the music express the sense. Wolsey added also wise rules besides those of discipline, which secured the intellectual life of the body and brought it into touch with the national universities.[1] These Constitutions were to be in force until 1521, when the Augustinian General Chapter would have to consider and ratify them.

Five years later, Wolsey took in hand the case of the English Benedictines. On January 20, 1524, Richard Beere, Abbat of Glastonbury, died; and, by a conventual act, the election of

[1] Wilkins' "Concilia," iii. pp. 683–88.

his successor was placed in the hands of Cardinal Wolsey. The delegates of the monks assembled in the private chapel at York Place on March 3rd of the same year, and met the Cardinal on this business. After mature deliberations and consultations with learned and prudent men, he elected Richard Whiting of that same monastery to be Abbat thereof. "He was a man," said Wolsey, "who was provident and discreet, commendable in life, morals, and knowledge; circumspect in spiritual and temporal matters, and able and understanding how to protect the interests of the Abbey."[1] How well the Cardinal judged, history testifies. When the evil days fell upon Glastonbury, the Royal Commissioners are forced to say no fault could be found with the monks of Whiting's house. "They were kept so straight;" and they were among "the solemn monasteries in which religion is right well kept," for which Parliament in 1531 returned public thanks to God. Whiting, the elect of Wolsey, still further shows the wisdom of the choice: he laid down his life in defence of the rights of conscience.

We find other Benedictine houses, such as Gloucester and Peterborough, besides Cistercian and other houses, putting the elections into his hands. In the case of the Abbess of Wilton[2] he

[1] Hearn's *Adam de Domerham*, i. pp. 97, 103.

[2] The nuns at Wilton were then very unruly. Thomas Bennet, Wolsey's Commissary, writes to his master (July 18, 1528), that he has used every effort to bring the nuns over to Wolsey's wishes,

went directly against the King's desires and the Boleyn influence, and appointed one who would rule discreetly and strictly. The Cardinal knew how prejudicial to the discipline and welfare of a house were old and feeble superiors. There are several instances of his urging such to resign; not that his efforts were always successful. Richard, Abbat of Hyde, was an example. For thirty-eight years he had held office when he received a letter from Wolsey, who, after compliments on ordering his house discreetly, tells him that now, from old age and imbecility, he was unable to look after it properly, and so had better resign. This the Abbat did not like. He thanked the Cardinal for his commendations, and assured him that he was neither so aged nor impotent of body or wit as not to be able to exercise his office to the pleasure of God, increase of good religion, and weal of his house. He had no intention of resigning, and trusted that Wolsey would rather conserve and aid him than "experiment any

but finds them so untoward that three or four of the "captains" had to be sent into ward. Only the new abbess-elect and her sisters were compliant. On the same day she writes to the Cardinal that since her coming home she had followed the advice of Bennet, and urged her nuns to be more "reclused within the monastery, against which they showed many considerations." She hopes in time to order herself according to his pleasure, and to rule her sisters according to their religion "without any such resort as has of late been accustomed" (Brewer, iv. n. 4528–9). The question of reform was evidently that of a due observance of the law of enclosure which results from the Benedictine vow of obedience.

sharpe means" to remove him. The Abbat of Peterborough was another case. The Bishop of Lincoln, his ordinary, reports (June 14, 1527) to Wolsey that the Abbat will not resign, and says that he will keep his office, as he is able as ever for it; moreover, he will ride to London Town to prove it to Wolsey. He evidently surrendered, for on the 13th of March 1528 he wrote to Wolsey to recommend either Dan Francis or Dan Boston as his successor. The former was a good religious man, and of gentle condition. But Wolsey, at the desire of the monastery, made his own selection.[1]

In 1524 Wolsey, as Legate, summoned all the Black Monks of St. Benedict to a General Chapter. Former legates, such as Otto (1236–37), had done so. These Italians did not understand the characteristic discretion which leaves so much to the judgment of local superiors. These foreigners had tried to force upon northerners a discipline which was easy enough in Italy. Perpetual abstinence from flesh meat was the crucial point.[2] The result of the measure of discipline was always the same. The monks tried over and over again to undertake the perpetual abstinence and failed. In almost every case dis-

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 4056.

[2] On the whole question of eating meat the reader is referred to the author's "English Black Monks of St. Benedict," vol. i. p. 16, where it is proved that from the days of St. Dunstan the eating of meat was allowed.

21. CARDINAL WOLSEY.
From the Arras portrait by Jacques le Boucq (?).

pensations were bought from Rome. Wolsey seems to have read the decrees of these other legates, and determined to enforce them. He drew up certain Constitutions, and laid them before the assembled Chapter. What they were we do not know. We can only judge by the reply the Benedictine fathers made to him. After thanking him for his Book of Statutes, and saying that many of his regulations ought to be received by all good monks, they point out that others were too austere for the times ; and as the number of monks and monasteries in England was too great to allow these regulations to be enforced without causing great murmuring, the Chapter begged the Cardinal so to modify the proposed reformation of their order as not to drive the weak into flight, apostasy, or rebellion, nor to keep away those who wished to enter the order. They feared that if the reformation be conducted with too much austerity, there would not be sufficient monks left to inhabit the monasteries.[1] From the days of Abbat Kyderminstre of Winchecombe, whose monastery became "like a little university," there had been among the Benedictines a movement towards that higher and more complete education which was so essential a part in Wolsey's plan of Reformation. The great numbers at this date of Benedictines at the universities show how the body had thrown

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 953.

itself into the current of the times. As far as we know, Wolsey had the wisdom to see the truth of their position, and did not attempt to reform them away. But the good effect of his interest in the order is to be seen when the Dissolution came. Then the English Black Monks stood out conspicuously among the religious men as having their houses thoroughly in order.

As it was clearly impossible to visit in person all the religious houses, Wolsey delegated his power to various bishops. For instance, when on his way after the famous meeting in France known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold, he wrote to the Bishop of Salisbury (October 20, 1521) empowering him, as his deputy, to visit the nunneries of his diocese, and proceed against such as were guilty of "misgovernance and slanderous living," and to remove the nuns unto other places of the same order as "he best and most conveniently can."[1] Many of the smaller houses, especially of women, had become disorganised through want of numbers and debt; hence discipline had fallen. Where there were only three or four nuns, it was impossible to keep exactly an observance which required at least twelve. One of these convents, Bromehall Priory, in which there were only two or three nuns, was dissolved December 5, 1521. At the beginning of January 1524, Clement VII., then newly elected, was con-

[1] Fiddes, p. 224.

tent to confirm Wolsey's legateship, and grant it for life, with all faculties, which was never heard of before.[1] The Cardinal, when thanking the Pope (February 24, 1524), says it was "an immense addition to his obligations to Clement, and that he will devote every effort to fulfil the Pope's commands, and omit no opportunity of forwarding his interest with the King." He also promises solemnly that he will execute his office with "as great care for the honour of the Holy See as for his own safety."[2]

Wolsey then turned his attention to the Friars. The Dominican, or Black Friars, took the proposed visitation sensibly. Wolsey's agent, Clerk, writes from Rome (July 28, 1525) that they are content to submit their suit to the Pope, and sue to Wolsey by way of supplication. The General of that order, a very wise, learned, and virtuous man, was about to write to Wolsey on the matter, so Clerk advises the Cardinal to "deal somewhat better with them, as they take their way."[3] But the Grey Friars, or Franciscans, were not so minded. Even before Wolsey announced his intention of holding a visitation of the Grey Friars there seems to have been a great outcry. The Pope himself was in fear. The rebellion of the Friars against John XXII. was not forgotten at Rome, nor that their dispute

[1] Clerk to Wolsey, Brewer, iv. n. 15.
[2] Ibid., 115.
[3] Ibid., iv. n. 1521.

went from theology to secular politics. Moreover there was a considerable amount of friction then existing between the Observants and the Conventual branches of the order, and this resulted in mutual distrust. Clement VII. had already written (July 7, 1524) to the Cardinal that the order of Friars Minor Observants seem to suspect that he was about to visit and reform them, but, while sure of Wolsey's wisdom, he begs him not to attempt any such thing, because the order is very great and much esteemed throughout the world; and though good may be done in England, it would occasion disturbances elsewhere. The Pope reminds him that the Friars could not have obtained their present position without God's blessing and their own good works, and he is to remember, in these troublesome times, that their goodwill and the opinion of others about them can do a great deal. They might, indeed, bear the visitation quietly, but they would fear the same thing would be attempted elsewhere, which they could not stand, as they have rules and superiors of their own. He therefore asks Wolsey to think of the good of Christendom rather than that of England, and to make use of gentleness and tact rather than severity in admonishing them.[1] The real motive of this letter will be seen later on.

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 477.

The Cardinal Protector of the Observantines wrote also the same day to beg Wolsey to give up the visitation, on the ground that while the Friars had no personal feeling against him, they were afraid of creating a precedent.[1] What the Pope did not put in his letter he, however, did not hesitate the following month to say to Clerk, and bade him tell Wolsey "for God's sake to use mercy with those Friars," saying that "they be as desperate beasts, past shame, that can lose nothing by clamour."[2]

Wolsey, however, was not the man to be frightened away from what he considered the good of Religion. He promised the Pope (October 21, 1524) that he could so use his legatine authority that no complaint should arise.[3] But the Friars still troubled, and took advantage of their General Chapter (July 1525) to urge the Pope to exempt them altogether from Wolsey's control. Again by Clement's order, Clerk writes to his master in the Pope's name "to deal moderately with them, for they be clamorous people, importunate, bold, and past shame, and by cause they have nothing to lose, and have great assistance here . . . and credit everywhere else among the lay folk." Clerk told the Pope that "no lucre nor glory nor envy" would move Wolsey to do anything against them, for

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 478. [2] Ibid., n. 610.
[3] Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum*, p. 544.

they were poor, evil, and few, and of little estimation compared to other religious in England. Clement said he knew this right well, and had put the matter off until the General came to Rome. Clerk hereupon said it concerned Wolsey's honour that the Pope should not too easily credit their vain and untrue complaints. Clement had, of course, to listen to both sides; but he promised to write, perhaps some Brief, to Wolsey to exhort him to be kind to the Friars, and undertook that there should be nothing derogatory to the Legate, whose honour he sought rather to increase than diminish.[1] The Friars so far gained the day as to secure a two years' restraint upon Wolsey's power. But their triumph was of short duration;[2] within a few weeks the prohibition was withdrawn.[3]

A matter which has never yet received attention seems to be one connected with this quarrel about the visitation. The Observantine General

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 1521.

[2] Hall in his Chronicle says (sixteenth year of King Henry VIII.): "In this month (*January*) the Cardinal Legate by his power legatine would have visited the Friars Observantines, but they in nowise would therein condescend, wherefore XIX. of the same religion were accursed at Paul's Cross by one of the same religion, called Friar Forrest" (ed. 1809, p. 691). This, in view of Forrest's after action, is not without its significance.

[3] When Cardinal Ximenes, himself a Franciscan Friar of the Observance, attempted to reform the Friars in Spain, a thousand of them emigrated to Barbary rather than submit, and Alexander VI. in 1496 forbade all further interference, though the prohibition was removed the following year.

was the famous Quignones, afterwards Cardinal. He was also Charles V.'s agent in the matter of the Divorce. As Wolsey stood or fell with the success or failure of Henry's case, one is tempted, knowing how many things influence the mind of man and how rare simple intentions are, to ask whether the attitude the Friars Observantine then adopted may not have had something in it of a personal revenge on the great Cardinal, who brought them under the power of his visitation. We shall be better able to judge this when we know exactly what was Wolsey's attitude in the matter of the Divorce.

As regards the Legate's project of reforming the Clergy, we have already seen how such prelates as Fox regarded it, and it is not saying more than the facts of the case warrant, when Mr. Blunt in his "Reformation of the Church of England" writes: "It may necessarily be thought that if the Reformation had been fully developed under Wolsey's continued guidance, many of the miserable divisions which ensued would have been avoided by his astute statesmanship, and the barbarities of each side checked by his humane policy."[1]

The Constitutions Wolsey, as Archbishop, issued for the Province of York in 1518 (1515?), while showing he did not forget his own diocese or province, are models for ecclesiastical govern-

[1] Vol. i. p. 43.

ment. Wisely he contents himself mainly with reinforcing the salutary enactments of his predecessors, and draws them up into one body of Constitutions. The greatest care is taken that the laity should be properly instructed in the essentials of their religion; and the course of instruction laid down is supremely solid and to the purpose. Four times in the year every priest with care of souls had to explain "in the vulgar tongue and without any subtlety or fantastic turning about of words," the fourteen Articles of Faith,[1] the ten commandments of the Law, the two Evangelical precepts of Charity, the seven works of mercy, the seven deadly sins, the seven opposing virtues, and the seven sacraments of grace. Such a course of instruction would be beneficial nowadays. Residence was enforced on all clerics, with a loss of income, unless they had papal dispensation or were absent with the Bishop's leave for purposes of study or otherwise engaged in his service. The Archbishop made special decrees for securing the sanctity of the houses of God, which are places for prayer and for humble asking forgiveness of sin. As regards the private lives of the clergy the enactments of Archbishop Greenfield were renewed, and they were forbidden to attend unlawful spectacles, especially duels, tournaments,

[1] Seven as regards the Blessed Trinity, and seven as regards the Sacred Humanity.

and sports in which blood might be shed; and as the life of the priest should be distinguished from that of lay folk, so ought they to be different in dress and deportment. On the question of morality, excommunication and the power of the secular arm is threatened. The whole document is worthy of study, and shows Wolsey as zealous for the better things.[1]

This Provincial Constitution shows on what line Wolsey would have worked as Legate of all England. No sooner had he received the office than he prepared for the general reform. A Legatine Visitation was a serious thing, and when it was first mooted it stirred up Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, to prevent it so far as the Southern Province was concerned. He summoned his suffragans to Lambeth to hold a council for "the reformation of enormities." The Archbishop seems to have based his action on some advice of the King. But as the right of holding such councils now pertained solely to the Legate, whose jurisdiction in England was universal, it was necessary, formally and at once, to vindicate his position. Wolsey therefore wrote a dignified remonstrance to Warham, saying that he was assured the King will not have him so little esteemed as Legate that "you should enterprise the said reformation to the express derogation of the said dignity of the See Apostolic and other-

[1] Wilkins' "Concilia," iii. p. 662.

wise than the law will suffer you without mine advice, consent and knowledge, nor ye had no such commandment of His Grace, but expressly to the contrary; and that will appear where His Grace and Highness willed you to repair to me at Greenwich sitting in administration of *divinis* in the quire." He therefore summons Warham to explain his disobedience to the King's commands, and courteously purposes they should meet at Richmond, "which shall not be much incommodious" to the old Archbishop.[1] This letter is undated, but it is probably of the midsummer, for Wolsey had summoned a Legatine Synod to meet at Westminster on September 8, 1518. This Synod, however, on account of the "sweating sickness" then raging, was prorogued first to December 8, and then to the first Monday in Lent, 1519. The decrees or acts of this Synod have not yet been discovered. It was probably a preliminary meeting, for Wolsey by that date had not obtained from Rome a free hand for his proposed reform. It was at this very time, when asking for increased powers, he was met with the significant reminder that Rome had not received an equivalent for doing so extraordinary a thing as to supersede local authority in the reformation of the clergy.[2] Naturally, the other prelates objected to have their ordinary authority superseded. But it was necessary that one strong man

[1] Wilkins, iii. p. 660. [2] Brewer, iii. n. 149.

17. HADRIAN VI., 1459—1523.
From an old print.

should initiate a reform which the bishops individually had neglected. Many obstacles were put in Wolsey's way. For instance, Warham, urged on by those who represented Wolsey as his adversary, and "the great tyrant," took advantage of a delay in the arrival of the Legate's full powers to cause the official of the Province of Canterbury, in the diocese of Worcester, to prepare to visit the monks of that cathedral monastery. They promptly refused to admit the visitation, as the duty now belonged to Wolsey; and they were excommunicated by the official in return. Wolsey in 1523 received extended powers from Hadrian VI., who is reported to have had more confidence in Wolsey than in all the other prelates in the world. He also expressed a wish to see the Cardinal and confer with him about the state of Christendom. They were both men zealous for reformation of abuses.

Strype, quoting from York registers, says that Wolsey in 1523 summoned the clergy of both Provinces to treat of reformation. They were to meet at Westminster. Like a wise prelate, he desired to take the clergy themselves into his confidence and to secure their co-operation. We know at this time Warham had summoned the Convocation of Canterbury to meet at St. Paul's. There was a grant to the King to be levied. Wolsey issued his orders that they should attend his Legatine Synod instead, and sent out a

special summons to this effect. What was done there in the way of reformation we do not know; but evidently Wolsey by his vigour disturbed the calm and serenity of some of the clergy. It was probably a cleric who wrote (May 14, 1523) that the Cardinal on the first day of Convocation, when mass was finished at St. Paul's, cited the clergy to appear before him at Westminster. There was another mass, and within six or seven days the clergy proved that the Convocation was void because they were summoned to appear before the Archbishop of Canterbury. Wolsey, therefore, sent out new citations for eight days after the Ascension: "and then I think they should have the third mass of the Holy Ghost. I pray God, the Holy Ghost, be among them and us both. . . . I do tremble to remember the end of all that high and new enterprise. For ofttimes it hath been that to a new enterprise there followeth a new manner and strange sequel. God of His mercy send His grace into such fashion that it may be for the best."[1] The writer was evidently a *Laudator temporis acti.*

As we shall see in the course of this work what it was that Wolsey did, we are thus enabled to make up for the loss of the acts of his synods and convocation. Decrees often remain dead letters; but, when translated into acts, the real life and force at work is then clearly shown.

[1] Ellis's "Original Letters," Series I. vol. i. p. 219.

Reforming the English Church

In 1518 Wolsey held a visitation of St. Paul's Cathedral and made salutary decrees to free the Chapter from the heavy burthen of debt then weighing upon them.[1] From a letter of the Bishop of Ely (December 28, 1520) we gather that the Legate had ordered the bishops to attend at their cathedrals at the times for holding ordinations. In his own diocese of York ordinations were duly held by his auxiliary bishop. In 1526 the statutes of Lichfield Cathedral were revised and submitted to him by the Bishop and Chapter. In 1528 (May 12) he received from the Pope special faculties to degrade criminous clerks.[2] Nor was this the only field of his reformation. There were crying evils in the spiritual courts demanding instant change. He made strenuous efforts to put the Provincial Courts, the Courts of Arches and Audience, upon proper and new footing, and tried to introduce an altogether simpler form of legal procedure.[3]

The consideration of the reform of the clergy leads us to the subject of the way in which he sought to bring it about. And this was mainly by the process of intellectual development.

[1] Dugdale's "History of St. Paul," appendix, p. 53.
[2] Rymer, xiv. 229.
[3] Dixon, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

CHAPTER VI

WOLSEY AND EDUCATION

Two ways of reforming—"Don't" and "Do"—Wolsey's reasonable foundation—Ignorance the mother of Superstition—Wolsey's treatment of heretics—Taverner "only a musician"—Wolsey's purpose in his educational foundations—The need of a cultivated clergy—Visits Oxford—His friendly relations with the University—Founds seven lectureships—His professors—The "College of Secular Priests"—The school at Ipswich—The duty of the Church—The resulting obloquy—The smaller monasteries—The greater "solemn monasteries"—Wolsey suppresses the smaller monasteries—Applies their property to his foundations—The monks and the common good—The abbats propitiate the Cardinal—Tonbridge Priory—The townspeople corrected—Wolsey blamed for his agents' harshness—The King complains—Wolsey's defence—Henry's reply—The Colleges founded—Their fate—Oxford and Wolsey.

THERE are two ways of bringing about a reform; and they can be summed up in the two words, "Don't" and "Do." It is easy enough to issue prohibitory laws, and it is just as easy to evade them. This Wolsey understood; and the absence of such decrees in all his educational work is noteworthy. He built upon the more reasonable and therefore more lasting foundation of teaching men to know, and then desire to work. Ignorance, he knew, was the root of most of the

mischief of the day: so by education he endeavoured to give men the means to know better. Falsehood can only be expelled by truth, and unless men have the opportunity of arriving at truth, it is not just to blame or punish them for adhering to what they do not know to be false. This attitude of mind accounts for the treatment Wolsey often meted out to those accused before his Legatine Court of Heresy. For instance, when Taverner, organist of St. Frideswide's, Oxford, was brought before him on that charge, the Cardinal set him free, excusing the man, and saying he was "only a musician."[1] Had the other prelates of the age realised the true cause of the religious disputes and how much they themselves were responsible for the parent Ignorance, the sacred name of Religion would not have had so bloody a record in this country.

Already had such men as John Colet, "Dean of Paul's,"[2] who had preached at Wolsey's installa-

[1] Wood's "Athenæ," i. p. 338.

[2] John Colet (1467?–1519) was probably born in London, of which city his father was twice Lord Mayor. About 1483 he went to Oxford. Entering the clerical state, he received many benefices. An enthusiastic scholar, he went abroad to Italy and studied in the universities there, and became versed in the early patristic learning. In 1498 he was ordained priest, and began to lecture at Oxford on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The new style he adopted, and the originality of his commentary, attracted much attention. He was entirely of the Renascence in its best aspect, and was fully alive to the needs of reformation. A friend of Erasmus, of Grocyn, Linacre, More, Wolsey, and Warham, his intellectual position can be easily understood. In 1504 Henry VII.

tion as Cardinal, done much for education. The formation of St. Paul's School in 1509, and the genial spirit of the learned Dean, had surely not been without their influence on Wolsey. In the educational foundations which cover the Cardinal's name with undying fame, it must be remembered that the distinct purpose he had in view was to bring up a clergy cultivated and in thorough touch with the thought of the day. His own words were that these foundations were for scholars "to be brought up in virtue and qualified for the sacerdotal dignity."[1] It was part of his reform to secure for England a clergy who should be in the front rank of learning and whose lips should guard wisdom.

In the beginning of 1518 the Cardinal attended Queen Catherine at a visit to Oxford. He was

made him Dean of St. Paul's, and in that same year he proceeded D.D. at Oxford. "The Dictionary of National Biography" says: "Colet lived in London the simple life that characterised him at Oxford. He continued to wear a plain black robe instead of the rich purple vestments of his predecessors; he was frugal in his domestic arrangements, and preached frequently in the Cathedral, and often in English." By the death of his father he became a rich man, but devoted his wealth to good works. His foundation of St. Paul's School was entirely his own. At a Convocation held in 1512 he preached the opening sermon and denounced the corruption of the bishops and clergy, and pleaded for the internal reform of the Church. He was accused of heresy, but Warham dismissed the charge as frivolous. He died September 16, 1519. His religious foundation of St. Paul's School is remarkable for the fact that he desired the active governors to be "married citizens," not ecclesiastics. His theories as to reformation were conservative, and were in the direction of a return to Primitive Ecclesiasticism.

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 5212.

15. JOHN COLET, c. 1466—1519.
Dean of St. Paul's.

already held there in high estimation, and had always preserved the friendliest relations with his old College.[1] Since June 1515 the University had decreed that all public preachers should pray openly for the good estate of the Archbishop of York, and after his death for his soul.[2] On the occasion of the royal visit, after assisting at an entertainment at Magdalen College, the Cardinal went to the Convocation House, where he harangued the University authorities and professed his willingness to serve them in all noble offices. He was trusted. It was known that he was a great upholder of education and had already, at least as early as the preceding April, begun his plans for establishing colleges. So in the June of that same year the University, by a solemn decree of Convocation, surrendered to him all their corporate privileges and statutes to be by him disposed and reframed. Whether Wolsey ever had time to reform the University statutes, so as to do away with a great deal of worn-out and antiquated machinery, is not certain. But he made a beginning by founding seven lectureships—viz. Theology, Civil Law, Physics,[3] Philo-

[1] In 1517 the Fellows had a present of venison from him; and again in 1520. (See Bloxam, p. 28.)

[2] Ibid., p. 24.

[3] The Cardinal was one of the chief promoters of the establishment of the College of Physicians in 1518, which Henry VIII. founded "to check the boldness of those men who profess physic more out of avarice than any confidence of a safe conscience, to the great damage of the ignorant and credulous people." See Goodall's "Royal College of Physicians" (ed. 1684), p. 7.

sophy, Mathematics, Greek, and Rhetoric. The readers he appointed were all men of the first ability. Thomas Brinknell, the reader in Divinity, wrote against Luther in the name of the University ; Ludovicus Vives read in Law ; Thomas Musgrave in Physics ; Richard Catelin in Mathematics ; Calphurnius in Greek ; Clement and Lupset were others of the Cardinal's Oxford readers.

Part of Wolsey's plan was to found at Oxford a great establishment, to be called "The College of Secular Priests." It was conceived on the most magnificent scale, and was intended to provide for more than five hundred students, all of whom were to be prepared for the priesthood. As a feeder to this College, even as Eton was to King's at Cambridge and Winchester to New College, Wolsey likewise determined to found a large school. His own birthplace, Ipswich, was to be the seat of this house of learning. But such grand and important schemes, regulated for in the minutest manner, with all that magnificence of detail which Wolsey knew how to value as an attraction, were costly undertakings and needed time and thought for their realisation. How deep was the interest he had in these educational measures is shown by the fact that the Cardinal, immersed as he was in secular and ecclesiastical politics and holding the destinies of Christendom in his hand, yet found time to bring them all to perfection.

Wolsey and Education

As the object Wolsey had in view was to benefit the Church by providing a higher education for the clergy, it was only right and proper that the Church should supply the greater part of the means. In carrying out this policy Wolsey had reaped undeserved obloquy.[1] Looking round England he saw that many of the religious houses were suffering from the effects of the Black Death, and from the social and economic changes which that visitation and the late civil wars had brought about. There were many of these communities in which the numbers had been reduced, so that their work was no longer done efficiently. Moreover, they were crippled by debt. It was an open question whether such houses, apart from old association and local interests, were of any real benefit to Religion at large; and whether, as the inmates could not or did not fulfil the conditions under which they received their benefactions, a use could not be found for their property to the greater benefit of the times. Also with the greater "solemn monasteries" another question arose. Did these expend a sufficient part of their

[1] As an example of the hatred and calumny the Cardinal incurred by touching the monasteries, we may take what Warham says in a letter to Wolsey (May 14, 1526), saying that when last at Canterbury, a White Monk at Sutton reported that Wolsey had suppressed that house and expelled the religious, taking away their lands and goods, so that they were obliged to beg or use some craft; he offered to sew at a tailor's and other occupations. The Archbishop examined him, and the monk confessed that he had spread the report and that it was untrue (Brewer, vol. iv. n. 2178).

wealth on the wider interests of the Church, or did they look only to their own interests? The way in which Wolsey acted shows the solution which commended itself to his mind, and it might with profit be compared with that adopted later on by Henry VIII. In the one we have almost entirely the private greed of the King and his favourites, and in the other the public utility of the Church of England and hence of the nation at large.

At a heavy expense the Cardinal procured Bulls from the Pope to dissolve such of the smaller houses as were reduced to six inmates. When they were dissolved, the rights of the existing members were not neglected, and due provision was made for their support. The property of these houses[1] was used for the purposes of education at the College at Oxford and the School at Ipswich. Likewise, in dealing with the abbeys, Wolsey, by course of visitations and other influences, made them know that they must exert

[1] The religious houses suppressed by Wolsey were as follows :— Buckinghamshire : Tyckford (*Cluniac*) ; Bradwell (*idem*) ; Ravenstone (*Austin*). Northamptonshire : Daventry (*Cluniac*). Staffordshire : Canwell (*Benedictine*) and Sandwell (*Benedictine*). Kent : Tonbridge (*Austin*) and Lesnes or Westwood (*Austin*). Sussex : Bayham (*Premonstratensian*) ; De Calcets (*Austin*). Essex : Wykes (*Benedictine*) ; Tiptree (*Austin*) ; Blackmore (*Austin*) ; Stanesgate (*Cluniac*) ; Horlesley (*Cistercian*) ; Thoby (*Benedictine*). Berkshire: Poughley (*Benedictine*) ; Wallingford (*Benedictine*). Suffolk : Dodenash (*Austin*) ; Snape (*Benedictine*). Oxford : St. Frideswide (*Austin*) and Littlemore (*idem*).

4. THE GATEWAY OF THE CARDINAL'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

themselves for the general welfare of the Church of England and were bound to work for the common good of the country. Hence we find abbats and other religious persons propitiating the great Cardinal with presents of money or plate for the new foundations.

Undoubtedly it often happened that in certain cases there was local opinion against Wolsey's plan. For instance, at Tonbridge. The question whether the Austin Priory should be dissolved or not was put before the townsfolk, who were asked whether they would prefer to have forty of their children brought up in learning and afterwards sent to Oxford, and to have also certain priests to serve them at the Collegiate Church or some six or seven Canons who had no direct duty towards them. Both Wolsey and Warham, the diocesan, were in favour of the dissolution, and to us the question does not seem to admit of hesitation. Though the Archbishop called a meeting of the townsfolk to discuss the matter, so few were interested in the business that only sixteen appeared. Thirteen of them were in favour of having the Priory restored, for what reason is not said; they may have been acting as representatives of the Canons. But the meeting finally referred the whole matter to the King and Wolsey.[1] This instance goes to show the care with which

[1] See *Archæologia Cantiana*, xiv. p. 343.

Wolsey proceeded, and the absence of high-handed methods in suppressing the smaller houses.

In some cases the agents the Cardinal employed acted harshly and without due consideration, and he had to bear the blame. His enemies were quite ready to seize upon the slightest occasion of damaging his reputation with the King. Henry, who had written (October 10, 1524) to thank Clement VII. both for the extension of Wolsey's legatine authority and for the faculties granted him for suppressing certain monasteries on behalf of the new foundations,[1] now, on these adverse reports, caused Sir Thomas More to inform the Cardinal of them and to demand an explanation. Wolsey promptly answered the King (February 5, 1525): "Touching certain disorders supposed to be used by Dr. Allen and other my officers in the suppression of certain exile and small monasteries, wherein neither God is served nor religion kept, which with your gracious aid and assistance, converting the same to a far better use, I purpose to annex unto your intended College of Oxford." He then tells Henry that though "some folk would be always more prone to speak evil and report the worst, without knowledge of the truth, have per case informed your Highness of some disorder that should be used by my Commissaries in suppressing of the said

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 722.

monasteries, yet most humbly I shall beseech your Highness, after your noble and accustomed manner, to give no credence unto them, unto such time as your Grace may hear my declaration in that behalf. For, Sire, Almighty God I take to my record, I have not meant, intended, or gone about, nor also have willed mine officers, to do anything concerning the said suppressions, but under such form and manner as is, and hath largely been, to the full satisfaction, recompense and joyous contentation of any person which hath had, or could pretend to have, right or interest in the same;" and he concludes by saying he would be wrong to acquire anything *ex rapinis* in the foundation of his colleges, which were intended for the King's honour, the advancement of learning and the weal of his own soul.[1]

In a letter of Henry to Wolsey (July 14, 1528) about the election of the Abbess of Wilton,[2] after saying, "I understand, which is greatly to my

[1] Harleian MS., 7035, f. 174.

[2] See above. It is worth while noting the King's anxiety for the welfare of this house. Although Anne Boleyn wanted her sister-in-law to have the post, yet Henry writes to her, and tells her that Wolsey had examined her nominee, and that she had confessed to immorality. "Wherefore," says the King, "I would not for all the gold in the world cloak your conscience nor mine to make her a ruler of a house which is of so ungodly demeanour; nor I trust that you will not that, neither for mother or sister, I should so distain mine honour or conscience" (Brewer, iv. n. 4477).

comfort, that you have ordered yourself to Godward as religiously and virtuously as any prelate or father in Christ's Church can do, wherein so doing and persevering there can be nothing more acceptable to God, more honour to thyself, nor more desired of your friends, amongst whom I reckon not myself the least," the King then refers again to the fact that many "mumble it abroad" that the goods for building the Colleges "are not best acquired, and came from many religious houses unlawfully, the cloak of kindness towards the edifying of your College."[1] To which Wolsey replied the following day: "I humbly thank you for your great zeal in desiring the purity of my conscience, and that nothing should be done by me in the matter of my College or otherwise which should give occasion to others to speak ill of me. I have received from many old friends and exempt religious persons various sums of money, but not so much as is reported; nor has any been corruptly given, as I shall be ready to prove to your Grace. But to avoid all occasion for the future, I promise your Majesty that if I should be compelled to sell all that I have, neither I nor any other by my consent shall take anything for the use of my College, however frankly offered, from any religious person; purposing so to order my poor life that it shall

[1] Fiddes, p. 174.

5. THE GATEWAY OF
WOLSEY'S COLLEGE, IPSWICH.

appear that I love and dread God and also your Majesty."[1]

His Colleges were started.[2] That at Oxford, which was to be known as "The College of Secular Priests," had its name changed by the King to "Cardinal's College"; but on the fall of Wolsey, the College, with all its rich and sumptuous furniture, was seized; and, perhaps in answer to Wolsey's piteous appeals "for his poor College," the institution was reformed on a much smaller scale, and Henry took to himself all the credit of the foundation, changing the name to King's College. It is now known as Christ Church. The school at Ipswich was entirely destroyed, and was never refounded. All that remains of Wolsey's munificence is the gateway. *Sic transit gloria mundi.* But in history Wolsey has achieved immortal renown:

> "Ever witness for him
> Ipswich and Oxford! one of which fell with him,
> Unwilling to outlive the good that did it;
> The other, though unfinished, yet so famous,
> So excellent in art, and yet so rising,
> That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue."[3]

The noble plans for building up a learned and prudent clergy, which had been Wolsey's aim,

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 4513.

[2] The Pope was much interested in the details of these Colleges, and, from a letter of August 21, 1526, hoped that due provision for at least two Greek lectures should be made (Brewer, iv. n. 2418).

[3] "Henry VIII.," Act iv. sc. 2.

came to naught through no fault of his. But Oxford still cherishes the great Cardinal as one of her most illustrious sons, and, as Convocation wrote to him, "not so much as a founder of a College but of the University itself."[1]

[1] Wood, *Annales*, ii. 27.

CHAPTER VII

THE SOLICITUDE OF ALL THE CHURCHES

Wolsey and the Episcopate—Nicholas V. on bishops' authority—Restriction of rights—The Papal supremacy in spirituals intact—The state of Ecclesiastical England—Monastic Cathedrals—Bishops *ex officio* abbats—The Benedictine element in the English Church—Wolsey's plan for new diocese—The case of Ely—Henry VIII.'s subsequent action—Rome and the new plan—Delays—The Cardinals very much offended—Wolsey and Ireland—Papal Provisions—The French Concordat—Confirmation of Bishops—Honorius I. and the Pall—A profitable occupation—The *annates* must be paid—Clement VII. yields—The Bull too late—"Remembrances for Ireland"—Reform of the Irish Church—Cleansing by fire.

Wolsey knew that in the immediate action of the Episcopate lies the strength of the Church. He would have had but little sympathy with those who try to exalt the Papacy at the cost of the Episcopacy. The greatest Pope of the Renascence, Nicholas V., had said the Roman Pontiffs had "extended their authority too far," and had "left no jurisdiction to the other bishops"; and that he "firmly purposed not to invade the legitimate rights of bishops" as the one way to preserve his own authority inviolate.[1] This

[1] Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, iii. 2, 895.

restriction of rights Wolsey had tried to break down, as far as England was concerned, by his legateship, which left him practically independent of Rome, as far as government was concerned. The question of the supremacy of the Pope in matters of Faith was not concerned at all in this. As we shall have to deal later on with his attitude to the popes, and shall show that his conduct was befitting his high dignities and offices of Archbishop, of Cardinal, and of Legate, we will not delay now, but will examine his work of reform and compare what existed in his day with the magnificent and statesmanlike plan he laid before the King.

For hundreds of years England had been divided into the two historic Provinces of Canterbury and York. In the southern province were the suffragan churches of London (*Secular*), Chichester (*Secular*), Exeter (*Secular*), Sarum (*Secular*), Hereford (*Secular*), Lincoln (*Secular*), and four small Welsh dioceses, together with the primatial Church of Canterbury (*Benedictine*), Rochester (*Benedictine*), Winchester (*Benedictine*), Norwich (*Benedictine*) Worcester (*Benedictine*), Ely (*Benedictine*), Bath and Wells (a double Chapter, *Secular* and *Benedictine*), Coventry (also a double Chapter)—in all eighteen, out of which ten, including the unimportant Welsh dioceses, had Secular canons, and six had purely Benedictine Chapters, while two had double Chapters,

Secular and Benedictine. The Province of York was then much smaller in number of dioceses. Besides the Metropolitan Church of York (secular), there were only the Benedictine cathedral of Durham and the Augustinian cathedral of Carlisle. In this account one thing will at once strike the reader, the position that the Benedictine or Black Monks had. They possessed one-half of the English sees in so far as there was attached to the cathedral a monastery whose monks served the cathedral, and formed, conventually, the Chapter which had the right of election. The Bishop of the diocese was *ipso facto* abbat of the monastery, and had a very real authority over the monks. Besides these monastic cathedrals, the Bishop of which was more frequently than otherwise a secular instead of a monk, the prelates of other sees, during the period we have in view, were, on the other hand, often chosen from Benedictine abbeys.

This Benedictine element in the English Church[1] is the key to Wolsey's plan of reorganisation. He mapped out the country, and where there was a great abbey and a large town which had grown up under its shadow, there he determined to set up a Bishop's chair. The case of Ely was an historical precedent. Originally an abbey, it was changed into a cathedral in 1109, and the Bishop stepped into the Abbat's stall,

[1] The custom of monastic cathedrals is almost peculiar to England.

while the Prior (now a Dean) retained his own as Cathedral-Prior. It is more than probable that Henry VIII. followed the plan drawn up by Wolsey, with his consent, when, after the dissolution of monasteries, he made a restitution of part of his ill-gotten goods. Thirteen new sees were arranged for, though six only, viz. Westminster,[1] Oxford, Chester, Gloucester, Bristol, and Peterborough, were actually founded. And within recent years, when the authorities of the Anglican Church were increasing the number of their sees, they followed the plan traced by Wolsey. But he never saw it realised. The difficulties he had to contend against in this necessary reform may be seen in the State Papers.

Information from Rome (October 30, 1528) says: "The erection of cathedrals was proposed in Consistory, and all seemed ready to consent to the King's desire; but as it is a matter of the greatest importance, it should be granted with greater authority than could be done then. The matter was therefore referred to the Legates (Wolsey and Campeggio), and then they were to report to the Pope."[2] This was, of course, only a move to gain time. The matter had been already settled in England, and the Pope's con-

[1] Westminster ceased to be a cathedral when Mary Tudor restored the abbey to the Benedictines. Her sister made it a Collegiate Church and a "Peculiar."

[2] Brewer, iv. n. 4886. This was, of course, after the Divorce proceedings had begun.

sent was all that was asked. The next step was to issue a Bull (November 12, 1528) empowering Wolsey to do what he had already done.[1] Perhaps a letter from Casale to Wolsey (December 17, 1528) will show the real cause at work. Wolsey had been lately appointed to Winchester. Casale says: "The Cardinals are very much offended, seeing how much they have lately suffered at the remission of fees required by the Cardinal for the expedition of the Winchester bulls."[2] On January 28, 1529, Gregorio Casale writes to Vincent Casale that "Many of the Cardinals are content that everything should be done in England, and the Bishops elected there, but that the *biretum* and the rochet should be conferred from Rome. Cardinal de Monte showed him an article, which he had found, of a previous license to create bishops in England."[3] Evidently from this, as we see in his arrangements for Ireland, Wolsey wanted to do away with the Papal Provisions, which system was against the law of the Realm. He was probably going to act as Francis I., who by his *concordat* with Leo X. secured for France the right of nominating the Bishops, or to revert to the older

[1] Rymer, xiv. 273.

[2] Brewer, iv. n. 5038.

[3] Ibid., n. 5228. Ten of the cardinals were willing to fall in with Wolsey's wishes if, besides paying 6000 ducats down, he would give up the see of Durham, the tax of which, 10,000 ducats, would come to them. There was also a vacancy at Canterbury in the near future.

English and canonical way of Capitular election. Formerly it was only the election of an Archbishop that required Papal confirmation; and, as Papal representative, the Metropolitan had the right of confirming the capitular election of his suffragans without resorting to Rome. Honorius I., in 634, had even given the Archbishops of Canterbury and York the right of conferring the Pall upon new Archbishops without recourse to Rome.[1] This soon fell out; but it was only in the later middle ages that the burthen of *annates* and provisions came to be felt so heavily.

Casale carries on the account in a letter to Wolsey (January 30, 1529), and says: "The difficulty about the bull for erecting abbeys into cathedrals arises from this, that most of the Cardinals think it will detract from the honour of the See of Rome if Bishops were created except at Rome, or receive their investiture from any one else but the Pope. But all are agreed on one thing; the *annates* must be paid."[2] It was not until May 29, 1529, that Clement VII. issued the Bull erecting certain abbeys into cathedral churches, but does not mention the names.[3] It was left to the Legate to decide whether the new cathedrals were to be served by religious or

[1] Bede, "Ecclesiastical History," B. ii. c. 17, n. 18.
[2] Brewer, iv. n. 5235.
[3] Rymer, xiv. 291.

seculars. But the Bull came too late for Wolsey to make any use of it.

Nor did he confine his attention to England only. The Lordship of Ireland shows his solicitude. A paper of "Remembrances for Ireland" shows a part of his scheme for giving peace to that distracted portion of Henry's dominions. In this paper Wolsey notes that as the bishops and clergy of the Irishry give most help to the rebels, be it provided that no clerk be promoted to any bishopric there unless he be of English birth, or of the English nation and language. The bishoprics are so poor that "no honest and learned man" of England will accept them; for while in England there are but two archbishoprics and nineteen bishoprics, there are in Ireland four archbishoprics and above thirty bishoprics. The Pope should be applied to to unite the sees, so as to make but two archbishoprics and nine or ten bishoprics. Also, that the churches of Ireland be built and repaired, the ministers reformed, and that no temporal men have any spiritual benefice, and no provision from Rome be henceforth allowed; and that Wolsey, as Legate of England and Ireland, appoint some bishop there as his substitute.[1] From Wolsey's point of view, he seems to have had reason for his proposal. The Archbishop of Dublin wrote (February 23,

[1] This paper, given in Brewer, vol. iv. n. 80, is of about the date of 1524.

1520) to the Cardinal telling him of the lamentable decay of the land, both in good Christianity and in other things, for lack of good prelates and curates in the Church ; and that he would do well to promote good men to bishoprics to be examples, &c.[1] The Cardinal-Legate was not allowed to do the work, and the Church of Ireland had to be cleansed yet so as by fire.

[1] Brewer, iv. p. 3952.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH

Wolsey the official guardian of faith—His orthodoxy certain—A great reformer of abuses—The instruction of the people—The New Learning in Religion—An almost expired Lollardy—Martin Luther's protest—How received at Rome—Wolsey forbids his works—A public act—Wolsey saw the real case—The Reformation a political as well as a religious change—Men good and true spoilt—The various treatments of Luther—Leo X. anathematised him—Clement VII. said to offer him the Hat—Charles V. inclined to support him—Wolsey's treatment of heretics—No burnings — Hideous cruelties of others—Henry VIII.'s Book against Luther—Wolsey doubts its value—Luther's opinion of Wolsey—Henry VIII. defends him — Lutheranism and Jansenism — Wolsey's professors charged with Lutheranism—Hugh Latimer and Wolsey—Dr. Barnes and the Cardinal's pomp—How Wolsey treated him—His philosophy—Wolsey tolerant—But his dread of real heresy—His warning to the King—During his power the reformation from Germany made no way—England—Wolsey's lesson to kings, churchmen, and people — Education and Truth.

We must now consider Wolsey in his capacity of the official guardian of faith. Some have ventured to look upon him as a favourer, at least, of the Reformation in matters of Faith. This is an utterly untenable theory, for the Cardinal was always perfectly orthodox and held the same Faith as all did in England with the rest of Europe. But he

was in fact, as we are showing, a great reformer, but only of abuses. He was seeking to reform the Church from within and without, laying hands upon the Deposit of Faith. He was eager to cleanse the Church from the accumulated evil effects of centuries of human passions. English kings had attempted what could be done by laws to restrain abusive acts, and councils had lately tried to protect the Church; but all these measures had been thwarted. Wolsey saw that what was wanted, as far as England was concerned, was that one resolute man should set his face manfully to the task in his own immediate sphere of action.

We have seen already how zealous he was for the people to be instructed in the knowledge of their Religion, and how he laboured that they should have worthy pastors. It remains now to be seen how he guarded them against the teachers of the New Learning in Religion who, coming from Germany, revived the smouldering embers of an almost expired Lollardy.

How the Augustinian friar, Martin Luther, began to protest against abuses—abuses which, by-the-bye, for the most part the Council of Trent acknowledged and reformed—and how from unheeded protest he went into revolt it is not necessary here to tell. But a letter from Rome to Wolsey throws some little light on the subject. Silvestro Gigli, Wolsey's agent in Rome in 1520, writes (May

28) that six months ago the writings of Friar Martin arrived. Some of their contents were disapproved of by the theologians of Rome on account of the scandals to which they might give rise; while others were condemned as heretical. After long debates it was decided by the Cardinals to declare Martin a heretic; and the agent announced that a Bull was in preparation on the subject.[1] The Bull was published in Rome, July 15, 1520, and Wolsey, as one of the official advisers of the Pope, was to offer his counsel for remedying the evil. He forbade at once the circulation of Luther's writings in England, and for this Leo X. wrote to thank him (March 16, 1521).[2] He, then, wanted to show by a public act that the English King and Church equally condemned the false doctrine. On May 12, 1521, the Cardinal, surrounded by bishops and abbats, held a solemn service at St. Paul's, where a sermon was preached at the Cross in the churchyard by Bishop Fisher, of Rochester, against the New Learning in Religion, and Luther's books were burnt. Wolsey also issued orders that every one possessed of any of the incriminated writings should, within a week, deliver them up, and the bishops were ordered to punish the refractory with excommunication.

Wolsey would not have been without sympathy with what was true and real in the movement in Germany, but he was too keen-eyed a statesman

[1] Brewer, iii. n. 847. [2] Ibid., n. 1197.

not to see that unscrupulous men were making the cry of Reformation, in Faith as well as in practice, a cloak for bringing about a revolution in secular politics.[1] While fully granting that there were many men, good and true, who were, by degrees, led into regrettable excesses and rejected the belief of centuries of Christianity, yet no impartial student of the history of the religious wars which devastated the Continent and England but will see how largely the question was, on both sides, one of secular politics, and that, in comparison, Religion was of minor account.

The various treatments Luther met with are instructive. After a cultured and good-humoured contempt for the barbarian Friar, Leo X. anathematised him. Clement VII. is reported to have been willing to give him the Cardinal's hat to quiet him, provided he chose to accept the grade.[2] And while Charles V., in 1525, was threatening, by invading Italy, to bring Clement VII. to his knees, he told the Florentine Ambassador, "Some day or other, perhaps, Martin Luther will become a man of worth."[3] Wolsey, knowing, therefore, how Heresy was becoming a political expedient, and it is almost always begotten

[1] The Reformation was not a religious movement only; it was social, economic, and political. To look at it in one way, without heeding the others, gives an entirely wrong idea of this momentous subject.

[2] "Calendar of Venetian State Papers," iii. n. 796.

[3] Ibid, iv. n. 926.

of Ignorance, grasped the situation thoroughly, and his treatment of the delinquents brought before him shows that he estimated the movement and its causes at their true value. Though stern towards false teaching, and clearly alive to the danger, the great-minded Cardinal had no taste for controversy, and had pity on those who, through ignorance, had become infected. Not one of the many brought before the Legatine Court on the charge of Heresy was burnt. And this Christian tolerance on the part of Wolsey is all the more creditable when we recall the hideous cruelties which prostituted the name of Religion in the later years of Henry, and in the reign of his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth.

When Henry VIII. wrote his book against Luther, the Cardinal seems to have doubted its use. Perhaps the King's extravagant assertion that Leo's "innocent, unspotted life and most holy conversation are well known throughout the world," was flattery too strong for Wolsey's common sense. But we find Secretary Pace writing to the Cardinal (June 24, 1518) that the King "is very glad to have noted your Grace's letter that his reasons be called inevitable, considering your Grace was sometimes his adversary hereon and of contrary opinion."[1] When Luther, a few years later, entertained hopes of securing Henry to the side of the Reformation through the Divorce, he

[1] Brewer, ii. n. 209.

wrote a humble letter of apology for his virulent attack on the King's book, and said that he had been under the impression that Wolsey, "that monster, the public hate of God and man, that plague of your kingdom," had been the author, and he offered to make a public recantation if the King would signify in which way he wished it done.[1] But it was not then a safe thing to abuse the great Churchman. In reply, Henry told Luther that the Cardinal was too prudent a man to be moved by abuse, and that he will be dearer to the King the more he is hated by Luther and those like him. Though Luther called the Cardinal "the plague of England," the King would have him know that the country owed many benefits to Wolsey, not the least of which was his opposition to Heresy.

At that time Lutheranism was, as Jansenism in the following century, a favourite charge to make against opponents. Many of the learned men, patronised by Wolsey and introduced into his colleges and chairs, were accused by his enemies of holding Lutheran doctrines, but without any real cause. A pleasing note in the character of the great Churchman is his attitude towards one who, though afterwards joining the reforming party, remained the sincerest and truest man of the number. Hugh Latimer had the Cardinal's

[1] *Epist. Lutheri*, iii. 24. This offer was probably the result of Charles V.'s more favourable attitude towards Luther.

T. Card. Ebor.

9. WOLSEY'S ARMS AND SIGNATURE.

leave to preach throughout the kingdom, and this proves, as Mr. Dixon remarks, that Wolsey considered him not as a Lutheran or heretic, but as one inclined to help forward a constitutional and proper reformation, such as he himself would have carried out if he had been allowed.[1]

Dr. Barnes, who afterwards, in 1541, was burnt at Smithfield, seems to have taken scandal at the magnificence affected by Wolsey, and preached a sermon at Cambridge against it. As this savoured somewhat of Lollardy, officious persons summoned Barnes before the Cardinal, who good-naturedly argued with him, and asked if he thought it was good and reasonable that he should lay down the silver pillars and pole-axes and other paraphernalia with which he, as Legate, Cardinal, and Chancellor, appeared in public,[2] and whether it would be better to coin them into money for the poor. Barnes tells us that Wolsey, on receiving an affirmative answer, only said, "Then how, think you, were it better for me (being in that honour and dignity that I am) to coin my pillars and poll-axes and to give the money to five or six beggars than to maintain the Commonwealth by them as I do? Do you not

[1] *Op. cit.*, i. p. 118.

[2] Cavendish, in describing the magnificence of the public retinue of the Chancellor-Cardinal, says there were "two great crosses of silver, whereof one of them was for his Archbishopric and the other for his Legacy, borne always before him, whithersoever he went or rode, by two of the most tallest and comeliest priests he

reckon (quoth he) the Commonwealth better than five or six beggars?" It opens to us, as Dr. Wordsworth remarks, some part of the philosophy upon which the Cardinal justified the fitness of the pomp and state he maintained. Wolsey dismissed Barnes, saying, "Well, you say very well."[1] There was nothing heretical in the sermon. It was only a matter of opinion, and the Cardinal was tolerant.

But from his deathbed at Leicester Abbey, almost his last words were to warn the King of the danger of religious disputes. This had been his dread all during the Divorce, for he knew that the Boleyn faction were inclined to Lutheranism. The dying Cardinal said to Kingston, "And say,

could get within all this realm" (p. 32). Roy, a former Observantine Friar of Greenwich, and then assistant to Tindal, writes in his shameless satire on Wolsey :—

"Before him rydeth two prestes stronge,
And they bear two crosses right longe,
Gapyng in every man's face.
After them follow two lay-men secular,
And each of them holding a pillar
In their hands, stead of a mace.
Then followeth my lord on his mule,
Trapped with gold under her cull
In every poynt most curiously.
On each syde a poll-axe is borne,
Which is none wother use are worne,
Pretendynge some hid mystery.
Then hath he servants five or six score,
Some behind and some before,
A marvelous great company."

[1] Cavendish, p. 47–8, *note*.

furthermore, that I request his Grace in God's name that he have a vigilant eye to depress the new pernicious sect of Lutherans, that it do not increase within his dominions through his negligence, in such sort as that he shall be fair at length to put harness upon his back to subdue them."[1] And he brought forward many examples of the evils that come to a kingdom in temporal matters through supineness in dealing with false teachers.

One thing remains to be said on this point. While Wolsey had power the teaching of the German reformers made no way in England. As soon as he fell, and no longer could guide the Church of England, then the flood-gates were opened, and the land became a prey to that most baneful of dissension, religious controversy. Wolsey read a lesson, too, to kings, churchmen, and people, that false teaching is best put down by true teaching, and that safety is not to be found in persecution by fire and sword, or in repression of adverse opinions, but in the blessings of an education which shows Truth in its beauty and Falsehood in its native repulsiveness.

[1] Cavendish, p. 321.

CHAPTER IX

WOLSEY AND ROME

Wolsey's relation to the Papacy—The Curial system — Theocracy — Canonists and the Papacy—St. Gregory the Great—The Universal Bishop—Papal Vicars—The Council of Trent and bishops—Provisions — Money the root of the evil — The Church of Rome and the Court of Rome—The Avignon System of Finance—The mercenary spirit—The nature of the Church in dispute—The theocratic tendency — The Pope-King — The Keys of the Kingdoms of the earth — Innocent III. and Magna Charta—St. Pius V. deposing Elizabeth: Sixtus V. supporting the Armada — Paul V. and the Oath of Allegiance—The claims of the Church and Cardinal Hergenroether — The Church "at war" — Wolsey saw the realities — Care to keep intact the Pope's spiritual authority—His intimate relations with the Papacy—Champions the Primacy of Peter—His desire to become Pope — His motives pure — His present position greater—Northern nations drifting away—Latin races monopolising the Church—A reform needed in head and members — Wolsey's candidature—Henry backs him up—Charles, always shifty, deceives —The election of Hadrian VI.—Campeggio a treacherous ally—Deception — How many votes did Wolsey have? — The last non-Italian pope—Wolsey's second candidature — His promises to the Cardinals—Henry to visit Rome in person—The Cardinal and the Emperor—Spain conquers the Church—Clement VII. the creature of Spain—The Golden Rose—The Cardinals compliment Wolsey—Their enthusiasm—France invades Italy—Charles master of the West —*Divide et impera*—Charles and the Pope—The Spanish attack Rome—Clement imprisoned—Learns his lesson—Alienates his friends —Wolsey comes to his defence—Sends him alms—Rome attacked again by the Spanish—Clement again a prisoner—Wolsey entreats the King to help—Henry's reply—Wolsey orders a general fast—Indifference of the people—Charles seeks to gain Wolsey—Bribes him with the Papacy—Wolsey's rejection—Prayers for the Pope—

Wolsey and Rome

The Litany at Christ Church, Canterbury—The Lord Cardinal weeps very tenderly—Wolsey offered to be made Patriarch and independent of Rome — Refuses schismatical proposals — Charles, "that most religious emperor"—Wolsey and the liberty of the Pope—A proposed convocation of Cardinals—A meeting to be held at Avignon—His eight articles for the regulation of the Church—The Cardinals and the imprisoned Pope—Clement's one aim—The Cardinal's one aim—The Cardinals meet—The case of Antoine du Prat—Charles again attempts to bribe Wolsey—The Cardinal saves France from schism—Clement a tool in the hands of Spain—The Divorce a proof of Wolsey's devotion to the Papacy—The relation of the Papacy to Wolsey—The Priest and the Levite.

We have now to study Wolsey in his relation to the Papacy, and, in order to judge him with truth, we are bound to take into consideration the temper of the times. Since the Curial system had become developed, the tendency at Rome was more than ever in favour of a theocratic form of government. The Pope was held to be not only the divinely appointed teacher and judge of matters of Faith, prerogatives which seem of themselves to be sufficient for securing the real Unity of the Church; but by slow degrees Canonists claimed for the Papacy the functions of a title St. Gregory the Great had refused to bear. They considered the Pope as the Universal Bishop, and bishops as practically only Papal Vicars. It is known how and under what circumstances, some few years after Wolsey's death, an attempt was made to get the Fathers of the Council of Trent so to declare themselves; but the bishops of that Council had no mind to reform the Church thus. Things

had not, it is true, advanced so far in Wolsey's time; but the situation was, perhaps, more acute then than it was later, when time had had its accustomed effect. We have referred to the policy of Provisions, and the great cause the *Curia* had for upholding this and analogous practices. Let us be quite plain. It was money that was the root of this and other evils.[1] The Church had flourished for centuries, and its Unity had not been impaired in the days when the system of Provisions had not existed. When the Church of Rome became the Court of Rome, with armies and embassies, officials and hangers-on, then it was natural that money should have an overpowering attraction. The Avignon System of Finance raised the getting of it to almost a fine art. This Wolsey had felt in his own case over and over again, and had known both the advantage and the necessity of money at the Court of Rome. Such a mercenary spirit aroused also an inevitable opposition.[2] The very nature of the Church was disputed, and while the

[1] Even the Bulls for Wolsey's attempts at reforming the clergy were taxed, and turned into a source of profit.

[2] The English Act against Provisions was really, as Mr. Maitland says in his "Roman Canon Law in the Church of England," an attempt to turn the Papal Law against the Pope: "Some of the King's lawyers seem to have caught at the idea that two could play at 'Execrabilis' of John XXII., and that, while the 'Reservation' was disregarded, the main provisions of the Bull might be enforced with advantage" (p. 150).

claims of the Pope to be above the Body were denied by many, those of the Church were set above the Pope. For instance, on occasion of the Conclave of 1503, the Cardinals sought to bind the future Pope to a less autocratic policy.[1] In the confusion thus caused men forget that the Head without the Body can do nothing, neither can the Body be of use without the Head. It is only by their mutual relations that Jerusalem is as a City which is at Unity with itself.

But the theocratic spirit was not content with claiming jurisdiction over all matters plainly and strictly ecclesiastical; it aimed at an entire jurisdiction in temporals over all the world. The Pope was not only the Vicar of Him whose Kingdom was not of this world, and who paid tribute for Himself and Peter to the earthly governor; but he was King of kings, the Lord and Master of the destinies of all men in both this world and the next.[2] He had the Keys not only of the kingdom of heaven but also of the kingdoms of this world. He claimed to have direct power and over-lordship everywhere. Every one in everything was subject to him, and he was subject to no one. He

[1] "Spanish State Papers," Bergenroth, i. n. 371.

[2] Paul IV. used to say "that the dignity of the Pontiff consisted in putting kings and emperors under his feet." He "wished to be feared by kings and emperors . . . saying that the Pope, as Vicar of Christ, was Lord of all temporal princes."—See reports of Sorenzo and Mocenego, Venetian ambassadors, in Alberi's *Relazioni.*

was above all law, all custom, and all right. For instance, as far as England was concerned, Innocent III. had (1215) condemned the *Magna Charta* and forbade any one to observe it. And years after Wolsey, St. Pius V. was to be found not only excommunicating, as was his right, but also deposing Elizabeth of England, and Sixtus V. supporting the Armada and putting the works of Bellarmine on the Index for allowing the Pope only an indirect power. Later on, we find Paul V. condemning the English Oath[1] of Allegiance of James I. because it denied his right to depose princes; and the consequences which that theory involved. Though often checked and ignored, here was the spirit. Cardinal Hergenroether, in his *Anti-Janus*, is a candid exponent of this school. He says: "The Church doth not on *principle* renounce rights which she has once exercised, and whose exercise under certain circumstances (and were it only in Africa) might, in a relative manner, become again necessary." The attempts to combine the temporal and the spiritual supremacy of the Pope is the whole case in a nutshell, and is the turning-point in the problem of the Reformation. When officials spoke of "the Church being at war with Perugia" or any other place, non-Italians smiled and allowed

[1] For a history of this Oath, see my "History of the Jesuits in England," p. 350 *seq.*

that the "Court of Rome was at war." They knew the circumference was larger than its centre; the universal Church than the local church of Rome.

These facts, which show the temper of the times, must be borne in mind when we begin to study Wolsey's relations with the Papacy. His statesmanlike mind seized the realities of the case. In every step he took he was most careful to preserve the Pope's spiritual authority intact. His legateship was obtained from the Pope, all his projects for reform were subjects of negotiations, debates, and payments; and the vast correspondence that exists shows how close and intimate were his relations. It was on this very rock he foundered in the matter of the Divorce. Indeed, we may even say that Wolsey fell because he championed the Primacy of Peter.

It is brought against Wolsey that he aimed at the Papacy. That he did so is nothing very extraordinary; for almost every one of the Cardinals did the same. Neither is there anything wrong in aspiring to a position which affords capabilities of doing good. The reason why one so aspires may indeed be indefensible and blameworthy. In Wolsey's case there is but little doubt that his motives were pure. Personally, he had nothing to gain by his election. So critical was the position of the Papacy in those days that Wol-

sey, as Cardinal, Legate, Archbishop, and Chancellor, held a more powerful and effectively greater personal position in the eyes of the world than did the Pope of Rome. France and Spain, who were contemptuous towards the Pope, feared and propitiated the English Churchman. Undoubtedly, Wolsey did desire the Papacy, and worked for it on three occasions. But we now know why he so laboured. It was to be in a position to extend to the whole world his projects of reform. He saw the northern nations drifting away on account of the abuses then existing in the *Curia* and outside it. He knew the Church was not meant to be monopolised by Italians or by the Latin race, nor was it necessarily to be governed after the ideas which commend themselves to them. He felt that he could and would do a work of reform which others shirked.[1]

We must now follow out the events as shown to us in the State Papers of the period. Leo X. died December 1st, 1521. On December 19th Bernard de Mesa, Charles V.'s ambassador in London, wrote to his master, who had promised to support Wolsey's candidature :—

[1] Since Wolsey's days Italians only have sat in Peter's Chair, and the government of the universal Church has been practically in the hands of that nation. Although the principle of Nationality is vehemently decried as being opposed to the Catholicity of the Church, it can hardly be denied that never has a more striking example of that principle been shown to the world than at Rome for the last three hundred years or more.

"It is the King's earnest wish that Wolsey should have the Papacy, and he is anxious beyond what I can express that your Majesty should concur in this, and has resolved to send letters to the Cardinals at Rome for that purpose. . . . As this negotiation demands great caution in case there is no probability of Wolsey's being elected, it is desirable that the choice should fall on Cardinal de Medici. To secure his good office, de Medici should not know that you are acting otherwise than in his favour, except that in the event of his having no chance to obtain the Papacy, then every effort should be openly made in behalf of Wolsey. As to Wolsey himself, he has solemnly protested to the King in the writer's presence that nothing would induce him to accept this dignity unless the Emperor and the King deemed it conducive to their interests. For no other purpose would he desire the Papacy except to exalt your Majesties." He then goes on to say that he believes the Cardinal is not very sanguine of success, though he is very far from despairing.[1]

It must be noted that it was Henry's great wish that his minister should be Pope. Other kings had had their creatures; why not he? The presence of an English Pope would redound in every way to the King's credit. Wolsey saw

[1] Brewer, "Letters and Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII.," iii. n. 1884.

this, and was willing, according to his ability, to serve his King. Charles V., always shifty, did not however keep his promise to Wolsey; nor did he favour Medici. He secured the Popedom for his old tutor, "a man unknown and not spoken about,"[1] who, as Hadrian VI., was elected January 9, 1522, but did not arrive in Rome until August 29th.

In the Conclave Wolsey had a treacherous ally. Campeggio, who had already been in England as legate (1518) and held English benefices, professed to be a favourer of Wolsey's candidature. The day after the election of the new Pope (Hadrian VI.), that is to say on January 10th, he wrote to Wolsey to tell him that, in every scrutiny, the Cardinal of York had some votes, sometimes eight or nine, and that he himself had told the Cardinals that Wolsey was over fifty and nearly sixty years of age.[2] This deliberate falsehood did not serve its purpose, for

[1] Ellis's "Original Letters," Series 3, i. 304. How bitterly factions raged during the Conclave may be seen from a despatch (December 2, 1521) from the Spanish ambassador in Rome, Juan Manuel, to his master, in which he says he thinks "there cannot be so much hatred and so many devils in hell as among the Cardinals" (Bergenroth, ii. n. 370). The Roman people were highly exasperated at the result of the election. The Cardinals did not dare set foot outside their houses "for fear of the people which hourly crieth out against them to their great rebuke and shame by reason of the said election."—Pace to Wolsey, January 28, 1522; Brewer, iii. n. 1995.

[2] He was then about fifty-one.

he was obliged to admit that he was not able to prove Wolsey's age to the satisfaction of the College. And it was his age which was a principal objection.[1] Clerk, Wolsey's agent, probably writing from information received from Campeggio, says that Wolsey had nine, twelve, and nineteen votes; but that objection was made against him on the score of age, his determined character, and that he "favoured not all the best the Emperor."[2] The Cardinals had had experience of a young Pope in Leo X., and they were in no hurry to repeat the experiment. What was liked was a Pope who would not live long and would give others a chance.

It will not perhaps surprise the reader to learn that Campeggio's circumstantial account is without foundation. According to the detailed account of the votings of this Conclave, as sent by the Spanish ambassador to his master,[3] Wolsey's name only appeared once.[4] From the numbers it seems quite impossible that he, at any time, could have had eight or nine votes, still less twelve or nineteen.

When Hadrian VI. died (September 14, 1523), after a short reign, Wolsey's candidature again

[1] Brewer, iii. n. 1952.

[2] Ellis, *ut supra.*

[3] Bergenroth, ii. n. 375.

[4] On Friday, January 3rd, at the fifth scrutiny, the Cardinal of York obtained seven votes. This is the only occasion that he got any number of votes worth recording, and it is the only time Juan Manuel mentions his name.

failed. Though Wolsey saw that the chief obstacle in the way of his election was his absence from Rome, he took no trouble whatever to remedy this. Yet he knew well enough what a sore point the election of a non-Italian had been in the case of Hadrian VI., and how much his long absence from Italy, with all the delays it entailed in the routine of administration, had been resented. In Wolsey's correspondence at this time with Henry, he tells (September 30, 1523) the King quite plainly that he was unfit for the dignity, and would rather serve him than be ten times Pope,[1] and (October 10, 1523) that he would never have aspired to the dignity except to please and serve him.[2] Had he succeeded, his great aim would have been to secure the pacification of Christendom. But as Henry wished it, Wolsey (October 4, 1523) once more sent instructions to his agents, Clerk and Pace, how to proceed. These instructions show us Wolsey's knowledge of the state of the Sacred College, and of the arguments best calculated to influence them. They were to be informed of his great experience, of his liberality, and of all the great promotions which would be vacant were he elected. Hadrian had been stern and kept the Cardinals at a distance; but Wolsey would be found to be frank and pleasing, and full of courteous

[1] Brewer, iii. n. 7.
[2] Ibid., n. 8.

inclinations. He would not, as other Popes had done, use the Papacy to found a great political house, for he was free from all ties of family or politics. Should he be elected, he guaranteed to be in Rome within three months; and the King himself had promised to visit the City. Wolsey told his agents to be liberal in their promises, as Henry would make good all they promised, "especially to the young men, who are generally the most needy."[1]

There was nothing in these instructions not strictly true; and had the Conclave looked to the interests of the Church instead of those of the Emperor, it might have been a happier history, both for the Church at large as well as for the Papacy itself. But once more the promises of support which Wolsey had received were delusive. In the reports there is not a word of Wolsey receiving a single vote.[2] Nay, rather, the great object had been attained; Spain had now rivetted its yoke on the Papacy, a yoke which, with a short exception, was to endure directly for years, and indirectly, by the traditions it created, even till a much later day. The Imperial Ambassador, on November 18, 1523, announced that Cardinal de Medici, the nephew of Leo X., was elected Pope, and was soon entirely the creature of Spain. Charles is assured that now his power

[1] Brewer, iii. n. 48.
[2] Bergenroth, ii. n. 611.

is so great at Rome that he might "convert stones into obedient sons."[1] The event proved the truth of this estimate of Clement VII.'s character. After one little attempt at liberty he was for ever the creature of Spain, having the fear of Charles V. always before his eyes. Clement, indeed, tried to make favour with Wolsey and Henry, and was willing, as we shall see in the Divorce, to go as far as they desired, except to break with Spain, in whose hands he then was. The year after his election he sent the Golden Rose to Henry, with a letter acknowledging all his indebtedness both to the King and to Wolsey, and said that the latter he regarded not merely as a brother but, in a manner, as a colleague.[2]

Neither were the Cardinals — when in difficulty — behindhand in trying to propitiate the rich and powerful Cardinal they had rejected. The Sacred College wrote a letter (February 9, 1527), in which they complimented him on the encouragement he gave to the King in defending the Church. Happy, say the enthusiastic Cardinals, is the Senate that has such a brother, such a member. Never in past time has there been any one, neither is there one, who contributes more to the advancement of the Holy See, and "who by his counsels makes the best of

[1] Bergenroth, ii. n. 610.
[2] Theiner, *op. cit.*, p. 544.

18. CLEMENT VII., 1478—1534.
From an old print.

kings every day better," and who watches over the Apostolic See "not so much as a son and legate, as a patron and protector." Placed as he is at a distance, and in the very corner of Christendom, he is, in piety and affection to the Church, superior to many who are much nearer. So long as Henry rules and has such an adviser, the Ship of the Church will ride safely through the storm. They are indeed gratified that the King and Wolsey are resolved to persevere in the good cause for which they reap the eternal gratitude of the College.[1]

The course of events which had roused such enthusiasm for the man who was hated and feared, must now be briefly sketched.

Clement VII. was elected September 14, 1523, and the following year Francis I. of France invaded Italy with three prizes before him: Milan, Pavia, and Naples, all held by the Spanish. The key to the position was considered to be Pavia, then commanded by Don Antonio de Leyva, the most active, intrepid, and able of all the Spanish generals. The siege began on October 28, and by February 23 the war was over. The expectation of France perished together with the flower of her chivalry. Francis was taken prisoner, and led away into captivity in Spain. Charles, now master of the West, had, with one significant exception, no one to oppose him. The dream

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 2866.

of a universal empire seemed on the eve of realisation. England was the only obstacle, and the eyes of all Europe were turned to see what she would do in the emergency.

With the characteristic procedure of a weak power that finds its advantage in the disputes of more powerful neighbours, Clement, acting on the principle of *Divide et impera*, had sided, more or less openly, with the French, as a means of opposing the Spanish influence then threatening to be too predominant in the Peninsula. Charles knew this perfectly well. He had also a long memory. He said to one of his Court: "I shall go into Italy, and there have a fairer opportunity of obtaining my own, and taking my revenge on those who have wronged me, especially on that poltroon, the Pope";[1] and a few days later he assured his Ambassador in Rome that those who had "offended him should find him as hard and as resolute as ever."[2] Nor was he long in keeping his word. On the night of September 19, 1526, the Spanish troops, under their commander Moncada, together with a band of German Lutherans and Cardinal Colonna, who was then in open rebellion against Clement, arrived before the walls of Rome, and entered the City at daybreak. The unfortunate Pope fled to the Castle of St. Angelo. His palace and the houses

[1] "Calendar of Venetian State Papers," iii. n. 920.
[2] Bergenroth, ii. n. 717.

of the Cardinals were sacked and the Church of St. Peter rifled and profaned. The Castle of St. Angelo was unable to sustain a siege. Moncada did not want to drive the Pope to extremities; he only intended to strike terror into the heart of Clement, and bring home to him that Charles was his master, and that "his victorious arms neither God nor man could resist with impunity."[1] This was the lesson Moncada enforced when inducing the Pope to make a treaty with the Emperor, and to leave the States of the Church in the hands of the Spanish and German troops. The helpless Clement made secret and fruitless attempts to form a league against his master, which, when discovered, only increased the Emperor's resentment. By vacillation and a deeply-rooted fear of opposing Charles, the Pope only succeeded in alienating friends who now concluded it would be a waste of men and money to support a cause he seemed willing, at any moment, to destroy.

Wolsey, however much he might feel inclined to despise Clement personally, yet, for the sake of the Church itself, was determined to discover a means of preventing the Pope from becoming altogether the bondsman of Spain. A large sum of money was sent from England to help him to secure his freedom; and this gift caused incredible joy to Clement, who said it had saved him from accept-

[1] "The Reign of Henry VIII.," p. 97.

ing most unjust conditions, and that by this means and the support of England he would escape from the worst tempest in which the Church had been tossed since the days of Leo. Three times 30,000 crowns could not have encouraged him more than Wolsey's kind words bidding him fear no danger, for whether an universal peace was made or the Emperor refused it, they would still support him. It was under the stress of such circumstances, and the genial influence of the golden shower, that the Sacred College wrote so enthusiastically to the great Cardinal of York.

The Emperor saw that Clement was altogether an impossible man to deal with on any terms but those of force; so the Spanish troops, being in possession of Italy, arrived again before Rome, May 4, 1527. On the 6th the City was once more taken, and on this occasion was given over to pillage and slaughter. Once again was the Pope besieged in St. Angelo, where he remained in captivity until the following December.

In Hall's Chronicles we get a probably true account of Wolsey's behaviour on this occasion. It is worth while reproducing at length.

"About the xxviii. day of May there were letters brought to the King of England from the French king of part of this trouble; but Sunday, the second day of June, the King received letters at the castle of Windsor, by the which he perceived all the order and manner of the sacking of

Rome and taking of the Pope, in manner and form as you have heard. Wherefore the King was sorry and so were many Prelates: but the Commonalty little mourned for it and said that the Pope was a ruffian and was not meet for the roume: wherefore they said that he began the mischief and so he was well served. But the Cardinal, which took this matter highly, called to him the Prelates and the Clergy and much mourned the fall of the Bishop of Rome and saw how the People grudged against the Spirituality for their great pride, pomp, and ill-living: Wherefore he came to the King and said: Sir, by the only calling of God, you be made Defender of the Christian Faith: Now consider in what state the Church of Christ standeth: See how the Head of the Church of Rome is in captivity: See how the holy fathers be brought into thraldom and be without comfort: now show yourself an aid, a defender of the Church of Christ, and God shall reward you.

"The King answered: My Lord, I more lament this evil chance than my tongue can tell, but where you say that I am Defender of the Faith, I assure you that this war between the Emperor and the Pope is not for the Faith, but for temporal possessions and dominions, and now since Bishop Clement is taken by men of war, what should I do? My person nor my people cannot him rescue, but if my treasure may help him, take

that which to you seemeth most convenient. For the which offer the Cardinal thanked the King on his knee, and thereupon the Cardinal caused to be gathered together of the King's treasure xii. score thousand pounds which he carried over the sea with him, as you shall hear hereafter.

"Then the Cardinal sent commissions, as Legate, to all bishops, commanding that they should cause in every parish church solemn processions to be made for the relieving of the Pope; and moved the people to fast iii. days in the week, but few men fasted, for the priests said that their commandment was to exhort the lay people to fast and not to fast themselves; and the lay people said that the priests should first fast, because the very cause of the fasting was for a priest. But none of both almost fasted."[1]

The Emperor was now anxious to disarm the opposition of England, especially as Wolsey was about to negotiate with France concerning the liberation of the Pope. When the new Spanish Ambassador came, early in 1527, to London, he told Wolsey "how earnestly the Emperor wished for his prosperity and welfare, and how much he was indebted to the Cardinal for his great services," and to secure them for the future he promised an additional "pension of 6000 ducats

[1] Hall's Chronicles, pp. 727, 728.

to be consigned on the best revenues in Spain."[1] And, now that Wolsey was going to France, Mendoza, the ambassador, dangled "a higher bait" before his eyes. Clement, who was Charles's captive, was reported to be illegitimate by birth, and this canonical defect, it was suggested, might be used to bring about his deposition, and then Wolsey could step into his place. "God forbid that I should be influenced by such motives," was the worthy reply of Wolsey to such flattering offers. "It is enough for me if the Emperor really intends to replace the Pope and restore the Church to its former splendour."[2] As Mr. Brewer says: "What was the poor and lank shadow of the Papacy, beleaguered by a noisy band of German ruffians in the Castle of St. Angelo, dependent on the charity of an aged beggar woman for a daily salad, compared with the substantial grandeur, power, and authority of one whom all agreed to honour, if they did not love?"[3]

But Wolsey, while diplomatically doing his best to help the Pope, did not forget the spiritual weapon of prayer. He, as we have seen, ordained public fasts and processions of penance to implore the succour of Heaven. On his way to France he tarried at Christ Church monastery, Canterbury, and assisted at the festival of the Translation of St. Thomas à Becket (July 7):

[1] Bergenroth, iii. pt. ii. n. 8. [2] Ibid., n. 113.
[3] *Op. cit.*, ii. p. 210.

"In which day of the said feast, within the Abbey (*cathedral*), there was made a solemn procession; and my Lord Cardinal went presently in the same, apparelled in his Legatine ornaments, with his Cardinal's hat on his head; who commanded the monks and all their quire to sing the litany after this sort: *Sancta Maria, ora pro Papa nostro Clemente;* and so perused the litany through, my Lord Cardinal kneeling at the quire door, at a form covered with carpets and cushions. The monks and all the quire standing all that while in the midst of the body of the church. At which time I saw the Lord Cardinal weep very tenderly, which was, as we supposed, for heaviness that the Pope was at present in such calamity and great danger of the Lance knights."[1]

In this journey to France, Wolsey had to meet with another temptation. If we are to believe Mendoza, the French ecclesiastical authorities, who had no desire to have the Pope a tool in the hands of their Spanish enemies, had approached Wolsey with a proposal to secure their independence of Rome, which they now regarded no longer as a merely spiritual authority, but one using ecclesiastical power for temporal ends. According to reports from Spanish sources, the archbishopric of Rouen was offered to the Cardi-

[1] Cavendish, p. 88. *Lanzen-knechts* was the name of the German mercenaries.

nal, together with the position of Patriarch of France and England. It was pointed out to him that his office of Legate might be revoked at any moment under the pressure of Spain, and all his good work brought to an untimely end. It was a great temptation, and a subtle one. To such schismatical proposals, if they were ever made, Wolsey would not listen. On the other hand, it is not impossible that Charles ("that most religious emperor," as le Moyne calls him), being bent on exploiting the Papacy for his own needs, would be quite ready to credit the French with an intention similar to his own. One thing, however, is certain; whatever the Spanish or French ideas may have been, Wolsey gave them no support. He had too keen an idea of the real office of the Pope to imagine that a doctrinal separation would improve matters. He, however, saw the danger lest the Church at large should be affected by anything done by the timid Clement, whose one object now was to regain his liberty and princedom. Wolsey, therefore, was very glad when it was suggested to him that advantage should be taken of his journey to France to bring about a meeting of such of the Cardinals as were then at liberty in order to consult about the welfare of the Church during the Pope's captivity. He desired, therefore, that the King of France should summon all the French and Italian Cardinals to meet near him to consider what is to

be done if the Emperor would not listen to reasonable terms.[1]

When Wolsey went to France he tried to bring about the meeting of the Cardinals at Avignon. We have in the British Museum the draft of eight articles he was going to propose for the regulation of the Church during Clement's imprisonment. There is also the draft of a suggested Bull which declared Wolsey to be the Pope's Vicar-general, with the fullest powers of dispensation during the captivity, and a promise not to allow of appeals to the Papal tribunal.[2] The main point of the proposed conference of Cardinals was to declare that they would not consider themselves bound by anything that the Pope, during his captivity, might be induced to do under Spanish pressure. This was really a measure for the freedom of action of the Pope. It was also to the advantage of Henry, for by this time it was known perfectly well that the matter of the Divorce had chance of being decided by Clement, not so much on its own merits as according to the needs of the Spanish policy.[3] And the stake at issue was far too great in Wolsey's eyes to be for a moment compared with what weighed with Clement. To the Pope it was a matter of the

[1] Harl. MS., 283, f. 66.

[2] This was, of course, in reference to the Divorce proceedings.

[3] Wolsey to Henry (September 5, 1527). "My lord of Worcester is privy to your secret matter, and will more readily obtain a general faculty for me *omnia faciendi et exequendi durante*

highest importance to get back his temporal principality over the cities of Ravenna and Cervia, then in the hands of the Venetians; to the Cardinal it was the wider question of preserving England in the Unity of the Faith.

Avignon, the proposed place of meeting, was a name of ill-omen at Rome. The Pope, so Wolsey learnt, took alarm and forbade the Italian Cardinals to leave Italy. The four French members of the Sacred College, however, met under Wolsey's presidency at Compiégne, and on September 16, 1527, wrote to Clement informing him that they had ordained prayers and fasts twice a week for his release; and they protested, if the Emperor proved obdurate, they would not recognise either the acts done under compulsion or the legitimacy of any new Cardinals created during his imprisonment.

It is necessary here to refer to the case of Antoine du Prat, Chancellor of France, for it is often brought up by enemies of Wolsey as a proof that he wanted to make himself independent of

captivitate summi pontificis, by which, without informing the Pope of your purpose, I may delegate such judges as the Queen will not refuse; and if she does, the cognizance of the cause should be devolved upon me; and by a clause to be inserted in the general commission no appeal be allowed from my decision to the Pope. . . . I am the more bent upon this as I hear the Pope has been sent to Gaeta under strict guard" (Brewer, iv. n. 3400). This expedient only shows the importance of the crisis in the Cardinal's mind, his entire determination to do justice, and his conviction that, under present circumstances, such was not to be expected from a prisoner in the hands of an enemy of England.

the Pope. Before Wolsey left France, on the conclusion of the embassy, Cavendish tells us: "In the morning that my Lord should depart and remove, being then at mass in his closet, he consecrated the Chancellor of France a Cardinal, and put upon him the habit due to that order."[1] Passing by the inexact word "consecration" as applied to a Cardinal, this is taken as proof that Wolsey of his own motion raised Du Prat to the cardinalate. But a letter in the Venetian State Papers puts the matter in the correct light. Jacomo Baretero, writing from Compiégne (September 18, 1527) to Count Francesco dello Somaia, says, "The day before yesterday the Chancellor received the habit and brief of Cardinal. He had declined taking the hat at present, wishing first of all to see the king's sons in France, but his Majesty compelled him to accept it."[2] The Pope, therefore, had already raised him to the Sacred College, and Wolsey's part was purely ceremonial, as was Warham's, when the Archbishop of Canterbury, on November 18, 1515, placed on Wolsey's head the hat during benedictions and prayers, while the Cardinal "kneeled before the middle of the high altar, where for a certain time he lay grovelling, his hood over his head."[3]

[1] P. 121.

[2] "Calendar of Venetian State Papers," vol. i. n. 169.

[3] Fiddes's "Life of Cardinal Wolsey" (second edition), p. 202.

While Wolsey was thus declaring for the freedom of the Pope, Charles was again intent upon bribing the Cardinal. "You must do everything in your power," writes the Emperor to Mendoza (September 30, 1527), "to bring the Cardinal to our service."[1] Wolsey meanwhile was doing all he could to save France from the Schism he was dreading in England, and which he saw was coming on slowly and surely, as Clement showed himself, more and more, to be a tool in the hands of Spain. He expressly says in a letter to Casale (January 7, 1528) that he was keeping the French in obedience to the Holy See, as, in consequence of the captivity, they had been thinking of having recourse to some inferior authority. He had also caused the English clergy to communicate with their brethren in Spain to bring pressure to bear upon Charles so as to release the Pope from his thraldom.[2] And the very matter of the Divorce, to the consideration of which we must now address ourselves, is an everlasting proof of Wolsey's devotion to the Papacy. While Clement was only too willing for the matter to be decided in England as long as he was not dragged into the question, and made

[1] All the arrears of his many pensions were to be paid, and the sum of 9000 ducats yearly with a promise of 6000 more until a bishopric was vacant, and the Duke of Milan was to be ordered to give him a marquisate with an annual rent of 12,000 or even 15,000 ducats (Brewer, iv. 3464).

[2] Brewer, iv. n. 3770.

it even a grievance that the Cardinal did not do so, while he temporised, flattered, cajoled, and deceived, Wolsey kept him steadily to the point that the Divorce was a matter for Papal authority, and could only be settled by an act of pontifical jurisdiction.

Before closing this account of Wolsey's relations with Rome, it may be worth while to note those of Rome to Wolsey. The *Curia*, as we have seen, hated, feared, and flattered him, resisted him when strong enough, and made as much money out of him as possible. When he fell, sad is the tale, not one word of sympathy came forth from the Pope, and not one attempt was made, even by the lifting of a little finger, to help the great Churchman in the bitter hour of his humiliation. Upon his death, though abundant letters passed at the time, there is not so much as even an expression of complimentary regret. Wolsey was then powerless to help or hurt. So the Priest and the Levite passed by.

CHAPTER X

THE DIVORCE

The history never adequately written—A simple question—Wolsey's share straightforward and honest—Henry's side—Katherine's—Charles V.'s —Clement VII.'s—The preliminary facts—Death of Prince Arthur—The Papal Dispensation—The negotiations—Spanish diplomacy—The earliest hint of the Divorce—Henry's ten mistresses—A gradual fall—Wolsey not responsible for the Divorce—Henry VIII. publicly exculpates him—Wolsey opposes it—Foresees the result—First approach to the Pope—The position of Henry VIII.—Wolsey's musings —The result—Henry's real case—Charles V. interferes—Prepares to test the Pope—A Diplomatic falsehood—Politic shifts—Wolsey's position to the Divorce—A merely legal case—Canonists responsible —Roman lawyers—Legal flaws in the Dispensation—Two impediments—Public Honesty—Dispensation insufficient—Further reasons— False suggestions — Proposed Commissions — Wolsey guesses the result—His deadliest foes — "My life will be shortened" — Asks for Campeggio — Clement VII. is warned — A simple question — Wolsey "dare put his soul"—The sense of injustice rankles— Clement trifles with the case — The fear of the Emperor — The theological question raised — Clement's opportunity — The ground shifted — Quignones warns the Pope — "This miserable pope" — Clement weeps—The temporal possessions at stake—A sad picture —Wolsey a Papal viceregent—Italian diplomacy—Campeggio appointed Legate — Clement's promise — The gout — An appeal — Poor Wolsey—His hopes—Campeggio arrives—A secret document —His secret instructions—The utter ruin of the Church—Katherine not regarded—Wolsey and Campeggio—Campeggio's untruths—His advice to Katherine—Wolsey kneels to her—The Pope's difficulty— The unfortunate Campeggio — Driven into a corner — Wolsey exasperated—The annihilation of the See Apostolic in England—"Ruin, infamy, and subversion" — Clement has full knowledge of possible results—Wolsey omits no part of his duty—Clement and Eternal Justice —A forged Brief—"Imperious language"—The Pope at the Emperor's mercy—The Legatine Court opened—Its futility—Katherine's

appeal—The Court suspended—Wolsey's part over—Italian shiftiness and Spanish terrorism—The fruits of failure—Wolsey's fall—An open question—Levitical Law—Bishop Fisher—The Peers petition the Pope—"A very ocean of ills"—Denied a remedy—A scolding reply—A strong opinion in Henry's favour.

The history of the so-called Divorce has never yet been adequately written. In one way it was the simplest question, but it got involved in a tissue of difficulties. Wolsey's share was a clear and straightforward one; Henry's, whatever it may have been in the beginning, soon drifted into other and less creditable projects, and while using Wolsey for one purpose, had other agents for the furthering of his ulterior motives; Katherine, whose story merited the sympathy of most readers, has her own side to the question;[1] Charles V., besides a perhaps natural affection (and as far as one can see this was mostly an excuse), was principally influenced by the political reasons of hindering any possible matrimonial alliance between the French and English, and of securing his power over the Pope; while the hapless Clement, willing to please the King and dreading to offend the Emperor, played one

[1] This can be seen fairly told in the late Mrs. Hope's "First Divorce of Henry VIII." It should be noted that the word "Divorce" is, as far as Wolsey was concerned, a simple misnomer; his point being that what was required was only a declaration of nullity. Moreover, at Rome, no case for a divorce, in the real sense of the word, would be accepted under any circumstances. Rome has always stood for the indissolubility of the marriage contract, once that contract has been entered upon according to the requirements of her laws.

11. HENRY VIII., 1491—1547.
From a picture by Holbein.

against the other as long as he could, and at last yielded to the force nearest at hand. As there were so many sides, it will be necessary for the future historian to study the story from each point of view. Then only can an unprejudiced judgment be passed upon an event so pregnant with results. Here we are concerned with the Divorce only in so far as Wolsey had a part to play, and it is our purpose to touch upon the actions of others only as they are necessary to make his share quite clear.

The preliminary facts are these: Prince Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII. (born September 20, 1486), was married to Princess Katherine of Aragon, November 14, 1501, having then completed his fifteenth year. His bride was at least three years older, having been born in 1483. After their marriage they lived at Ludlow Castle in the Principality. Arthur, always of weakly constitution, died, it is said, from the effects of a fall from his horse[1] on the 2nd of April following. There is the distinct evidence of Henry VII. to prove that the young couple lived together in the marital relation,[2] besides the legal supposition that the marriage was duly consummated. Fourteen months after Arthur's untimely death, a treaty,[3]

[1] Brown, iv. 369.

[2] Duke of Manchester, *Court and Society*, vol. i. p. 59.

[3] The negotiations concerning the young widow are very pitiful reading. Henry VII. would not part with her dowry, and on the death of his own wife, is said to have offered to marry her himself,

dated June 23, 1503, was entered into between Henry VII. on one part, and Katherine's parents, to approach jointly the Holy See and get a dispensation for the marriage of Katherine with her deceased husband's brother, Henry, then a boy of ten years. In this agreement, which was duly signed by the two high contracting parties (dated June 23, 1503), it is expressly stated that the marriage of Arthur and his wife had been consummated. The statement runs as follows: "The Papal dispensation is required, because the said Princess Katherine had on a former occasion contracted a marriage with the late Prince Arthur, brother of the present Prince of Wales, whereby she became related to Henry, Prince of Wales, in the first degree of affinity, and because her marriage with Prince Arthur was solemnised according to the rites of the Catholic Church, and afterwards consummated."[1]

"a thing not to be endured," as Isabella wrote. There does not seem to have been any idea at first of a betrothal to Henry, then Duke of York; and it was not until the old King in April (1503) proposed to marry his widowed daughter-in-law that the match between her and his son was finally arranged in the June. The first reference I can find to any such proposal, is a letter from Isabella on July 12, 1502. In view of the future dispute it will be well to note that Arthur, dying April 2, 1502, his widow was not betrothed again for more than fourteen months after. This tends to a belief that the marriage was duly consummated. The second son, Henry, born June 28, 1491, was Duke of York at the time of his brother's death. He was not made Prince of Wales until February 18, 1503 (ten months after). Was not this in order to see whether Katherine had issue by her late husband?

[1] Bergenroth, i. n. 364.

But, two months after, Ferdinand wrote to his Ambassador in Rome denying that the marriage had been consummated, saying: "In the clause of the treaty which mentions the dispensation of the Pope, it is stated that the Princess Katherine consummated her marriage with Prince Arthur. The fact, however, is that although they were wedded, Prince Arthur and the Princess Katherine never consummated the marriage. It is well known in England that the Princess is still a virgin. But as the English are much disposed to cavil, it has seemed to be more prudent to provide for the case as though the marriage had been consummated, and the dispensation of the Pope must be in perfect keeping with the said clause of the treaty. The right of succession depends on the undoubted legitimacy of the marriage." [1]

I think there is but little doubt that this was merely a device to leave a loophole for a future occasion if need be. Spain may have doubted the intentions of Henry VII., who, like Katherine's

[1] Bergenroth, n. 370. But it is worth noticing that Katherine's mother, two months after Arthur's death, did not know the fact, for she wrote (June 16, 1502) to the Ambassador in England: "Be careful also to get at the truth as regards the fact whether the Prince and Princess of Wales consummated the marriage, since nobody has told us about it" (ibid., n. 325). It was this same Ambassador, the Duke de Estrada, who, in the name of the Spanish monarchs, signed the treaty of June 23, 1503; which the King of Spain formally ratified (September 24, 1503), without making any alteration in it (ibid., n. 375). Isabella followed suit six days after.

parents themselves, had all along played fast and loose. The dispensation was granted by a Bull of Julius II., dated December 26, 1503, in which the question of the consummation was left open, and the phrase *forsitan consummatum* was introduced. It was not until March 12, 1505, that the Bulls arrived in London.

It is important to point out that whether the marriage was consummated or not, the legal point was not affected, seeing that this contingency was expressly provided for in the Bull.

When Henry VIII. came to the canonical age of consent his father caused him to make a declaration (June 27, 1505), by which he refused to fulfil the contract with Katherine; and it was not until he succeeded to the throne (April 22, 1509) that, of his own choice, he married (June 11) Katherine, then some eight years his senior.

Hitherto, as far as I know, it has not been pointed out that, very early in their married life—that is to say, by the autumn of 1514—the young King seems to have entertained ideas of divorcing his wife. In the Venetian State Papers there is a letter of Vetor Lippermano, taken from Sanuto's Diaries under the date of September 1, 1514, in which he mentions a report that Henry meant to annul his own marriage, and would obtain what he wanted from the Pope as France did

with Pope Julius.[1] This report gives us grounds for partly crediting Henry's later assertion, that for a long time he had been tormented with scruples about the validity of his marriage with Katherine. It must not also be lost sight of that there was a religious side to Henry's character that was, however, strangely in opposition to his practice. If he was in the habit of hearing two or three masses a day and of attending to his external duties as a Catholic, he saw no inconsistency in frequent breaches of the Moral Code. In a list of his expenditure for the new year of 1528, after large presents of plate to his Queen, Wolsey, and other great persons of his court, comes the significant entry: "To the King's ten mistresses," among the names of whom is that of Jane (?) Boleyn.[2]

[1] Vol. ii. n. 479. There is a mistake here. It was not Pope Julius who granted the divorce of Louis XII. from Jeanne of Valois, but Alexander VI. Louis afterwards married Anne of Brittany, who died January 9, 1514. He then married Mary, the sister of Henry VIII., afterwards the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, to whom she had previously been betrothed. The cause of the divorce between Louis and Jeanne was granted on the following plea. Louis, then Duke of Orleans, at the age of fifteen was espoused to his cousin, Jeanne of Valois, aged twelve, the second daughter of Louis XI. She was virtuous but ugly. When Louis XII. became King, he wrote at once to the Pope saying he had been forced into the marriage, and had protested secretly against the violence done to him; moreover, he had never consummated the marriage. The Pope annulled the marriage, Jeanne returned to Berri, and in 1500 founded the Order of the Annunciation at Bourges, and herself took the veil in 1504, dying on February 4 in the following year. She is known as St. Jeanne de Valois.

[2] Brewer, iv. n. 3784.

This is worth while mentioning, as it may also show that, at any rate in the beginning of the Divorce proceedings, there was another real side to the business. It is not our intention here to account for Henry's behaviour in the matter, nor to attempt the impossible task of whitewashing his character. Mr. Froude has attempted it with no success. But I think it should be borne in mind that *nemo repente fit pessimus.* Henry's fall was gradual.

Wolsey is often made responsible for the project of the Divorce; and it is asserted that he proposed it to avenge himself on Charles for deceiving him as to the Popedom. Now, one thing is absolutely certain. Wolsey had nothing whatever to do with suggesting the Divorce to the King. At the Legatine Court Henry publicly exonerated him from any such thing. Cavendish, who was probably present as Wolsey's gentleman-usher, says that the Cardinal in court addressed Henry in these terms: "Sir, I most humbly beseech your Highness to declare me before all this audience whether I have been the chief inventor or first mover of this matter unto your Majesty; for I am greatly subjected of all men herein." "My Lord Cardinal," quoth the King, "I can well excuse you herein. Marry" (quoth he), "ye have been rather against me in attempting on setting forth thereof."[1] And the

[1] Cavendish, pp. 153, 154.

same chronicler in another place says: "The matter was then by the King disclosed to my Lord Cardinal; whose persuasions to the contrary made to the King, upon his knees, could nothing effect."[1] Wolsey himself, just before his death, told Kingston: "I have often kneeled before him in his privy chamber on my knees, the space of an hour or two, to persuade him from his will and appetite: but I could never bring to pass to dissuade him therefrom."[2] That Wolsey should have so entreated him on the first disclosing of the matter is natural, for he saw clearly from the beginning what would be the result to all he held dear and sacred.

The first inkling of the Divorce seems to have been about 1525. An urgent and most private letter was written by the Cardinal to Clement VII., and sent by a confidential agent, who took a message *vivâ voce*. The date of the letter is April 21, 1525.[3] Wolsey begs the Pope, considering

[1] Cavendish, p. 139. [2] Ibid., p. 321.

[3] Wolsey may have taken advantage to reply to a letter of Clement VII., dated September 7, 1524, in which the Pope declares against certain persons who pretended license and dispensations from the Holy See for contracting and consummating marriages within the prohibited degrees. The Pope declared he would grant no such dispensations, and proclaimed the parties separate. Wolsey was ordered to have this published by all the bishops of England and Ireland. It is by no means impossible that this may have renewed in Henry's mind the scruples concerning the dispensation granted for his own marriage against which Warham and Fox had objected in the beginning. It was also when we know these scruples began to take form, that Anne Boleyn first appeared in Court in 1522, being then but sixteen years of age.

the perils of the time and his own anxiety to serve the Holy See, to listen to what was said by the Bishop of Bath, to whom Wolsey had written his inmost counsels. He concludes by assuring Clement that he is ready to shed his blood in the Pope's cause.[1]

I think that there can be but little doubt that this refers to the project of Divorce, which now began to take definite shape. The position was certainly full of danger to the national peace. The King was without male heirs; Katherine, who had an incurable disease, was past child-bearing, and serious difficulties would arise to the country were there no prince to succeed Henry. So far was obvious; and it was when things had arrived at this point that the King opened his mind, or at least, as such men are wont to do, disclosed it partly to the Cardinal.

During the embassy to France, Wolsey wrote as follows (July 29, 1527) to his royal master: "We daily and hourly musing and thinking on your Grace's great and secret affair, and how the same may come to good effect and desired end, as well for the deliverance of your Grace out of the thrauld, pensive and dolorous life that the same is in, as for the continuance of your health and the surety of your realm and succession, considering also that the Pope's consent, or his Holiness detained in captivity, the authority of

[1] Theiner, *op. cit.*, p. 548.

the Cardinals now to be convoked into France equivalent thereunto, must concur for approbation of such process as I shall make in that behalf; and that if the Queen shall fortune, which it is to be supposed she will do, either to appeal or utterly decline from my jurisdiction (one of the said authorities is also necessarily requisite), I have none other thought ne study but how in available manner the same may be attained. And after long discussion and debating with myself, I finally am reduced and resolved to two points: the one is that the Pope's consent cannot be obtained and had in this case, unless his deliverance out of captivity be first procured; the other is that the Cardinals can do nothing in this behalf, unless there be by them consultation and order taken, what shall be done *in administratione rerum ecclesiasticarum durante dictâ captivitate summi pontificis.*"[1] He goes on to say that if the Pope were free he could "finally be induced to do all things therein that might be to the King's satisfaction and purpose," and thus bring the affair to a "most sure, honourable, effectual, and substantial end." But in case the Pope remained in captivity, the Cardinals in France were to declare they would not be bound by anything that Clement might do.

This letter is useful in showing that Wolsey considered that Henry had a real case, and that

[1] Cotton MS. Vitell., B. ix. 158.

the Papal authority was necessary to settle the matter. We can also see that he had little hope of success while Clement was under Spain. Strangely enough, on the very day the Cardinal was thus writing, Charles also wrote to Mendoza that "we have ourselves also written to Rome to his Holiness through another channel respecting this ugly affair, entreating him to revoke the Legatine power conferred on the Cardinal of England; or, if he should deem it more advisable, to command by sentence that neither the said Cardinal nor any other ecclesiastic of England, of whatever rank or dignity he may be, take cognisance of the said affair, he, the Cardinal, being suspected of ill-will towards the Queen, our aunt, but on the contrary, the case to be brought forward at Rome before his Holiness and the Sacred College of Cardinals, there to be tried and judged by them."[1] Charles evidently did not forget that he had Clement in his power, or that his Ambassador in Rome had told him that the new Pope was entirely his creature, or that the Spanish influence was so great that "stones" could be converted into "obedient sons." He was going to make the trial.

We are not called upon to defend Wolsey in giving countenance to the diplomatic falsehood (if it were such at all), agreed upon by Henry and himself, that the first suggestion of a diffi-

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 3312.

culty was made by the French Ambassador when a marriage between Henry's daughter and Francis was under treaty. Wolsey's rôle as a politician is not the question now; and if acts of his in that capacity are stains upon his renown as a great Churchman, they are, after all, as the world would judge, not very great faults. They were politic shifts made at a period when the business was only begun; and when, as it is clear from a letter of the Cardinal to his Roman agent, it was by no means certain that the result might not be a confirmation of the marriage rather than a dissolution.

What position did Wolsey take up in the negotiations for the Divorce? It is perfectly clear from the following letters he thought that, with a little patience, the King's intention could "honourably and lawfully take the desired effect."[1] In his eyes the question was simply a legal one. Canonists in the course of ages had succeeded, by means of various impediments, in raising the marriage contract into such a highly artificial state, that it was by no means difficult for one with a nice legal sense to find out flaws or quibbles in documents that were not without value to the lawyers in Rome. We venture the surmise that these lawyers, often laymen, were not altogether adverse to methods of drawing up documents in such a manner as would provide

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 3400.

for more business in the future. The case, as Wolsey saw it, was this. The Dispensation of Julius II. was a legal document, the terms of which required rigid examination. Wolsey found legal flaws in this document; and on these alone he fought the case. He made no question as to the Pope's power to grant the dispensation; as far as he was concerned the dispute did not touch theology at all, it was only a legal point. The contract between Henry and Katherine was based on a document, and the question arose: Was that document drawn up in due legal form? This was the whole point.

On July 1, 1527, the Cardinal wrote to the King, who already showed signs that he suspected him of being unfavourable to the project. After asserting "that there is nothing earthly that I covet so much as the advancing thereof," Wolsey mentions the point which seems to him the strongest of all in favour of the Divorce. Putting aside, for the time, Henry's constant assertion that the marriage of Arthur and Katherine had been duly consummated (this would have brought into question the theological point), Wolsey contents himself with the more tenable and legal ground that, Katherine and Arthur being "married *in facie Ecclesiæ* and contracted *per verba de presenti*, there did arise *impedimentum publicæ honestatis*, which is no less *impedimentum ad dirimendum matrimonium* than Affinity, whereof

of which impediment the Bull maketh no express mention."[1]

In order to grasp the question of the Divorce, it is of the highest importance to understand the Canon Law on which Wolsey based his argument. According to Canon Law there are two kinds of impediments to the marriage *contract:* (1) *impedimentum dirimens*, which makes it *impossible to enter upon a valid contract* [*e.g.* a man with a wife living cannot possibly, according to Canon Law, contract another marriage; such a contract is null and void from the beginning]; (2) *impedimentum impediens*, which only makes the marriage illegal *but does not annul the contract* [*e.g.* marriage without the publication of banns, or in the forbidden times, remains a real marriage but carries with it the offence of disobedience against the Law]. Now, among the *diriment impediments* are classed those of *Affinity* and of *Public Honesty*. The latter is the relationship arising from a contract of matrimony not yet consummated. For instance, a man cannot marry the mother, daughter, or sister of the woman to whom he is formally betrothed. This impediment exists even after the death of one of the parties or (in view of Canon Law) their attempted marriage with another person. When the contract is broken

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 3217.

off by mutual consent, the impediment of Public Honesty ceases to exist. It is an open question whether a dispensation from Affinity covers that of Public Honesty without specifically stating it.[1] Wolsey held it did not. We must bear clearly in mind that according to Canon Law the two essential steps in a marriage are the Betrothal [*i.e.* the Contract] and the Consummation. What we call in England "the Marriage Service" is only the public ratification of the contract and obtaining the blessing of the Church.

Wolsey's plea, and surely a sound one, though it appears disputable, as everything can be, was that the Bull, dispensing from only the impediment of Affinity, left that of Public Honesty untouched. Thus the Dispensation being insufficient and not meeting the case, was altogether ineffectual to validate the new contract. Therefore Henry and Katherine had never contracted a valid and lawful marriage.

Writing to Sir Gregory Casale in Rome (December 5, 1527), Wolsey opens out other points: "I have told you already how the King, partly by his assiduous study and learning, and partly by conference with theologians, has found his conscience somewhat burthened with his present

[1] Sanchez, *De Matrimonio* [ed. 1602], ii. p. 421, &c.; iii. p. 965, &c.

marriage.[1] . . . He has made diligent inquiries whether the Dispensation granted for himself and the queen as his brother's wife is valid and sufficient, and he is told it is not. The Bull of Dispensation is founded on certain false suggestions, as that his Majesty desired the marriage for the good understanding between Henry VII., Ferdinand and Isabella; whereas there was no suspicion of any misunderstanding between them. And, secondly, he never assented or knew anything of the Bull nor wished for the marriage. On these grounds it is judged inefficacious. Next, when the King reached the age of fourteen, the contract was revoked, and Henry VII. objected to the marriage.[2] To this the King attributes the death of all his male children, and dreads the heavy wrath of God if he persists. Notwithstanding his scruples of conscience, he is resolved to apply for his remedy to the Holy See, trusting that, out of consideration of his services to the Church, the Pope will not refuse to remove this scruple out of the King's mind, and discover a method whereby he may take another wife, and, God willing, have male children. As his Holiness

[1] If the Dispensation was not legal the marriage was, of course, null and void, and hence it became a matter of conscience. This, however, was mainly the King's affair, not Wolsey's, though in his official capacity of Keeper of the King's Conscience, he was bound to see that Henry did not violate the law by a doubtful marriage.

[2] A nice legal point might be this: Did not the rejection of the Bull and refusal to use it destroy its efficacy? And was not a new Dispensation needed when Henry did eventually marry Katherine?

is now in captivity, and there are some who will use their efforts to interfere with his wishes . . . you shall then request the Pope, all fear and doubt set aside, to consider the state of the case, the infinite advantages which are likely to arise to the Apostolic See if, without disclosing this affair to any one, without tract of time or circumstance, he will freely grant a special commission to this effect in form of a Brief directed to me, granting me a faculty to summon whom I please to inquire into the sufficiency of the Dispensation according to the tenor of a bill enclosed. . . . As the Pope may possibly have regained his liberty before your arrival, and then not think so much of the King's friendship, or if he should allege that in consequence of his arrangement with the Emperor he cannot do for the King what he would have done, you shall set before him the uncertainty of the Emperor's promise, and the inevitable tendency of his party to exalt the Imperialists at the expense of the Church. . . . If his Holiness shall make a difficulty of granting a commission to me, as one of the King's subjects, for taking cognisance of the cause, you shall urge it strongly, asserting that I will do nothing foreign to my duty as a Christian and a Cardinal." [1]

From the earliest period Wolsey saw clearly what the result would be. Whichever way the business ended, it was pretty sure to mean his

[1] Brewer, iv. 3641.

own ruin. If the Dispensation were declared null and void, and Henry married Anne Boleyn, her party, Wolsey's deadliest political foes, would triumph. Whereas on the other hand, as he wrote to Casale (December 6, 1527), "If the Pope is not compliant my life will be shortened, and I dare not anticipate the consequences. I am the more urgent as the King is absolutely resolved to satisfy his conscience; and if this cannot be done he will of two ends choose the least, and the disregard for the Papacy must grow daily, especially in these dangerous times. Considering the premises, I am a humble suitor to the Pope to grant this request, not so much as an English subject as one who has a certain knowledge of what the result must be."[1] He also wrote directly to the Pope to tell him if he desired to keep the King and England devoted to him, if he desired the restoration of the Holy See, he must send a Decretal Commission in the most ample and strongest form.[2] In another letter to Casale (December 27, 1527), Wolsey suggests, from the King, that Campeggio, or another Cardinal, be sent with full powers to determine the case; this would take away any plea the Queen might make against Wolsey holding the commission. In equity, the King could not be expected to consent to the case being heard in

[1] Brewer, iv. 3644.
[2] Ibid., 3646.

Rome, where none of his subjects could have safe access; and, moreover, the proofs must depend on witnesses who will have to be examined in England. The letter ends up with a warning that it will be useless for the Pope to send a Legate to inquire but not to pronounce sentence, for the cause has already been duly discussed and examined, and the King could not consent to such a course without the greatest prejudice to the jurisdiction of the Church. Time was now of the utmost importance, and delays were dangerous.[1]

The matter, from Wolsey's contention, was so simple, only to decide whether a Dispensation was valid or invalid, that we cannot be surprised to find him complaining that the Pope had granted such ordinary favours to others who had done less to deserve it, and yet refused the King who asks for nothing more than what is just.[2] Again, as the delay grew more irksome, Wolsey, early in 1528, wrote to Clement imploring him, on his knees, to assent promptly to the King's request. If it be not just, the Cardinal said he was willing to undergo any punishment, and he expressed his dread lest the King should be driven by human and divine laws to seek his rights from the whole of Christendom, seeing that by the Emperor's influence justice was delayed to him.

[1] Brewer, iv. 3693.
[2] Ibid., 3770, and Theiner, 557.

The letter ends by warning the Pope, as a Christian man, not to allow his authority to be thus injured.[1]

In some instructions to Gardiner and Fox who had gone to Rome, the one in the King's interest and the other in Wolsey's, the Cardinal charges them to assure the Pope that he would not, for any earthly affection to his prince or desire of reward, transgress the truth or swerve from the right path, nor would he have consented in any way to have reported to his Holiness otherwise than his conviction which was of the insufficiency of the marriage, nor have used any dissimulation. If God has given any light of true doctrine to the great divines and lawyers of this realm, and if in this angle of the world there be any hope of God's favour, Wolsey is well assured, and "dare put his soul" that the King's desire is grounded upon justice and not upon any grudge or displeasure to the Queen, whom the King honours and loves and minds to love and treat as his sister with all manner of kindness. . . . If they find the fear of the Emperor hinders the Pope, they are to insist on the dishonour done to the Holy See, if through any fear of any earthly person Clement refuses to exercise the justice that is in him and abandon his friends. If the King cannot obtain justice in this way, he will be compelled to seek it elsewhere, and live

[1] Brewer, iv. 3912.

out of the laws of the Church, and however reluctant, he will be driven to this for the quiet of his conscience.[1] Another letter from the Cardinal to Campeggio at this same period says that the matter admits of no delay, for it is so plain as not to admit of discussion, and too righteous to be brought into controversy.[2]

Considering on the one hand Wolsey's contention that the Dispensation was defective as a legal document, and on the other the Pope's perpetual delay in settling so simple a matter, it is not, I think, any wonder that the sense of injustice began to rankle deeply in both Henry and Wolsey's souls, and became the main cause why, when Wolsey's retaining hand was gone, Henry cast off obedience to the Roman Jurisdiction.

To while away the time, and to keep up the appearance of friendship, Clement sent dispensations and commissions which were of no good, and made all sorts of suggestions to escape the dilemma. He knew if he inquired into the case, *as put by Wolsey*, justice, based on his own laws, would probably demand a verdict for the King; but this could be only at the expense of the favour of Charles, and *mutatis mutandis* so would it be if he took the opposite line and refused to entertain the case. Henry's own

[1] Brewer, iv. 3913.
[2] Burnet, "History of the Reformation," iv. 59.

eagerness and impetuosity played into the Pope's hand. He was not content to leave the matter in the able hands of Wolsey; by the agents he sent to Rome with independent instructions the fatal theological point was raised. He made the question now, not whether the Dispensation was valid, but, had the Pope, by divine law, power to grant it at all? This was the point Wolsey had so carefully avoided raising. Clement and his advisers now had the opportunity of shirking the question they were endeavouring to avoid. There is but little doubt, we think, that had the matter been allowed to remain on the point that Wolsey raised, the marriage, according to Canon Law, would have been declared null and void. Henry spoilt his own case.

Charles V. sent Quignones,[1] the General of the Friars Minor, to forbid the Pope to grant the sought-for commission.[2] Clement, fearing that when the Emperor knew that he had done as much as he had the Imperialists would ruin or even kill him, openly averred that he had exposed himself to death unless Henry came to his assistance; for "if the Emperor is allowed to possess more of Italy than the kingdom of Naples he will

[1] Made cardinal (August 22, 1528).

[2] The Pope confessed, writes Knight to Wolsey (January 1, 1528), that when he was in the castle of St. Angelo the General of the Observants in Spain required of him in the Emperor's name to grant no act whereby the King's Divorce should be judged in his own dominions (Brewer, iv. 3751).

be master of everything." "Truly," says Casale, whom we are quoting, "it is a pitiable thing to leave this miserable Pope *in potestate canum*. Clement said, weeping, it would be his ruin to grant the commission, for he was living at the mercy of the Imperialists who held all the State; he could hope but little from the French; while the Florentines desired nothing more than his destruction. His sole hope of life was from the Emperor, and this would now be destroyed; and the Imperialists would seek a cause to destroy him; for they would say that he moved the King to this from hatred to the Emperor."[1] It is indeed a pitiful sight to see the Pontiff involved in the clouds of these considerations through which the light of Eternal Justice did not seem to pierce. We need not, for our present purpose, dwell more on this sad picture. The Cardinal St. Quatuor admitted the commission desired was indeed conformable to papal law. It is clear, therefore, say the English agents to Wolsey (March 31, 1528), "only fear of victory of the Spaniards letteth this cause. And they all fear lest peradventure *victrix exercitus Hispanus* round upon this matter make a quarrel."[2]

At last, on April 13, 1528, Clement, then at Orvieto, got so far as to issue a Bull empowering Wolsey, as his viceregent, to take, in conjunction

[1] Brewer, iv. 4168.

[2] Pocock, "Records of the Reformation," i. 104 (*sic?*).

with Archbishop Warham, cognisance of all matters concerning the King's Divorce.[1] But as Gardiner reports, "here began a new tragedy." The English envoys at the Papal Court were led up hill and down hill and through all the mazes of Italian diplomacy. It required all their native common sense at last to triumph so far as to get Campeggio[2] appointed Legate with Wolsey to try the cause; and to make Clement write with his own hand, that having issued the commission he would not yield to any request to issue letters or Bulls restraining it.[3] A promise he did not keep.

But Campeggio tarried on the way; he had the gout, it is said. Wolsey wrote to him (May 23, 1528) urging haste; for unless he wished the authority of the Church to be condemned, he must not delay, otherwise irreparable harm would ensue;[4] and in his distress he asked that

[1] Rymer, xiv. 237.

[2] Campeggio had been in 1524 appointed Legate in Germany. We learn from the Venetian State Papers that in the Consistory he made three conditions before he would accept the office. He required 2000 ducats to be paid down before he left Rome; the Papal promise, in case of his death during the legation, that the bishopric of Bologna should be given to his son; and that the Pope should also undertake to provide a husband for one of his daughters, both of these children being illegitimate (iii. n. 795). The latter fact is mentioned by Giustinian (ii. 1178), and Sanuto's Diaries corroborate it. The history of the Campeggios is not of the highest. This Cardinal certainly resisted all attempts to make him go beyond his commission. He had to go back to Rome, and in the hands of the Pope and Emperor were all his hopes. The rich benefice in Spain that he received was probably his recompense.

[3] Brewer, iv. 4169.

[4] Pocock, i. 165.

the Cardinal of Ancona, or any one fit, should be sent if Campeggio could not travel.[1] The delay, to say the least, was suspicious, considering all that had transpired. There is such a disease known as diplomatic gout. Whether this was the case or not, Wolsey suspected that it was the Pope himself who deferred Campeggio's coming until he could see which of the armies in Italy proved victorious.[2] There was probably something more than gout in Campeggio's delay; for on July 20, 1528, an appeal was lodged by the Imperial ambassador to the Pope on behalf of Katherine demanding that Campeggio should not be sent, that the cause itself should be revoked to Rome, and that Wolsey's faculties, as Legate, should be suspended.

With health broken down in an "old and cracked body," Wolsey's great position made his case all the more pitiable. He was being slowly ground between the upper and nether mill-stones. The French Ambassador in London, Du Bellay, writing (August 20, 1528) to Montmorency, says: "I have been told on good authority, though I do not give it as certain, that a little before this sweat,[3] the King used most

[1] Brewer, iv. 4289.

[2] Pocock, i. p. 156. "Now he refuses to allow Campeggio to execute the commission he has given him and delays his coming by imagined excuses."—Fox to Gardiner, ibid.

[3] The plague, known as the Sweat or Sweating Sickness, appeared first in England in 1485, then again in 1506, 1517, and once more

terrible language to him (Wolsey) because he seemed desirous to cool him, and show that the Pope would not consent to it. Sometimes in walking with me, while he spoke of his affairs, and of the course of his life up to that time, he has said to me that if God permitted him to see the hatred of the two nations extinguished and firm amity established, as he hopes it will shortly be, with a reform of the laws and customs of the country, such as he would make if peace came, and an assurance of the succession, especially if this marriage took place, and an heir male came of it, that he would then retire and serve God to the end of his days, and that undoubtedly he would take the first opportunity of abandoning politics. I think he sees that if this marriage is accomplished he will have much to do to maintain his influence; and when he sees himself in despair of it, he will give out that he retires voluntarily, '*guarny de ce qu'il debvra estre*'; and, in fact, for these three months past, he has been building and administering in his bishoprics and completing his colleges with great diligence."[1]

Campeggio arrived in England on October 1, 1528, bringing with him a secret document, the

in 1528. During this last visitation Henry was in deadly fear: "He confesses himself every day, and receives our Lord at every feast; so also the Queen, who is with him, and Wolsey for his part."—Du Bellay to Montmorency (July 21, 1528), Brewer, iv. n. 4542.

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 4649.

Decretal, which defined the law and left the Legates to decide the question of fact; but the Cardinal was instructed to show it only to the King and to Wolsey. It was no good, and was only a pretence to gain time.[1] He, however, did not come for the purpose for which he had been asked. This is quite clear from the secret correspondence of the times and the official letters which passed between him and the Pope's secretary, Salviati, and his confidant Sanga. The latter wrote (September 16, 1528) that "every day stronger reasons are discovered which compel the Pope to remind you that you are to act cautiously, and to use your utmost skill and address in diverting the King from his present desire and restoring him to his former love towards the Queen. Should you find this impossible, you are not to pronounce in any manner without a new and express commission from hence. If, in satisfying his Majesty, the Pope would incur merely personal danger, his love and obligation to the King are so great that he would content him unhesitatingly; but as this involves the certain ruin of the Apostolic See and the Church,[2] owing to recent events, the Pope must beware of kindling an

[1] He was then really ill; at least so it appears from the correspondence.

[2] But confer Matthew xvi. 18: "*The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" There was either a confusing of the *Curia* with the Church in the mind of the writer, or a practical disbelief in the words of the Promise.

inextinguishable conflagration in Christendom. The Emperor declares himself well satisfied with the Pope's neutrality, and is willing to agree to a peace through his medium. But if so great an injury be done to the Emperor, all hope is lost of the universal peace, *and the Church cannot escape utter ruin, as it is entirely in the power of the Emperor's servants.* You will not, therefore, be surprised at my repeating that you are not to proceed to sentence under any pretext without express commission; but protract the matter as long as possible, if haply God shall put into the King's heart some holy thought, so that he may not desire from his Holiness a thing which cannot be granted without injustice, peril, and scandal." [1]

This confidential communication affords the best defence of the English attitude regarding the Divorce. The *Curia* was shirking the inquiry "*owing to recent events*," and as the question of justice towards Katherine is not mentioned in this and so many other such documents, at least on the surface (and we can penetrate no further), there is but too much excuse in taking the words "injustice, peril, and scandal" to refer to the difficulties of the Pope's personal position and the will of the Emperor, his master.

Wolsey, in his first interview with Campeggio, showed him that, in order to maintain and increase the authority of the Pope in England, he had done

[1] Brewer, iv. n. 4737.

his utmost to persuade the King to apply for a Legate, although many of the English prelates had declared it was possible to do without one. He said that on account of Charles's recent success in Naples and the constant recurrence of Campeggio to the plan of reconciling Henry and Katherine, even offering a new Dispensation, he suspected that instructions had been sent to delay the matter. This Campeggio denied with all earnestness, although at that very moment he had received and was acting on the instructions of Sanga quoted above.[1] The great point Campeggio was now working for was to prevent at all costs the case from coming to trial. He even essayed to induce Katherine by the paternal love the Pope bore her and his confidence in her prudence, not to press the matter to trial, but rather to take some other course which would give general satisfaction and greatly benefit herself and her affairs.[2] The advice was that she should go into a nunnery. Campeggio expressed himself as displeased at her obstinacy in refusing to accept his advice,[3] which was enforced by Wolsey also, who "kneeled down before the Queen and for a long while prayed and supplicated her to accept the good counsels and the

[1] Campeggio to Salviati (October 17, 1528), Theiner, p. 570.

[2] Campeggio to Sanga (October 17, 1528), Læmmer, *Mon. Vat.*, p. 25.

[3] Campeggio to Salviati (October 26, 1528), Theiner, p. 573.

goodwill of the King to her honour, convenience, and benefit."[1]

In another interview with Wolsey, Campeggio tried to explain the Pope's difficulty. The "present calamities" of Rome always came up to the front. Wolsey made it very clear, says Campeggio to Sanga, that if the King's desires were not complied with, fortified and justified as they were by the reasons, writings, and counsels of many learned men who feared God, the speedy and total ruin would follow of the kingdom, of himself, and of the Church's influence in the country. The unfortunate Campeggio in his distress declares: "I have no more moved Wolsey than if I had spoken to a rock! His objections were always founded upon the invalidity of the marriage and upon the [in]stability of the realm and the succession. . . . I do not see how judgment can be deferred even for a brief space. They will endure no procrastination, alleging that the affairs of the kingdom are at a standstill and dependent on the issue of this cause, and if it remains undetermined it will give rise to infinite and imminent perils."[2] When Campeggio, driven into a corner, represented that he had been ordered to await further directions, and that before proceeding to judgment he would, when he had made up his mind, write his opinions to the Pope, Wolsey became greatly

[1] Campeggio to Sanga (October 28, 1528), Læmmer, p. 29.
[2] October 28, 1528. Ibid.

exasperated and said: "If this is the case I do not wish to enter into negotiations with one who has no power. This is not the way to treat the King." And many times did he say to the Italian: "Most Reverend Lord, beware lest, in like manner as the greater part of Germany, owing to the harshness and severity of a certain Cardinal, has become estranged from the Apostolic See and from the Faith, it may be said that another Cardinal has given the same occasion to England with the same results;" and Wolsey impressed furthermore upon him that if the Divorce were not granted the authority of the See Apostolic in England would be annihilated. Campeggio confesses that Wolsey had proved himself very zealous for its preservation, having done and still doing for it very great service. Although he spitefully added: "Because all his grandeur is connected with it."[1]

At this time the perpetual burden of Wolsey is the approaching "ruin, infamy, and subversion of the whole dignity and estimation of the See Apostolic" if justice were not done. Writing to Casale (November 1, 1528), the Cardinal tells him that the course the Pope is taking "will drive the King to adopt those remedies which are injurious to the Pope and are frequently instilled into the King's mind. Without the Pope's compliance I cannot bear up against the storm; and as often

[1] October 28, 1528.

as I reflect on the conduct of his Holiness I cannot but fear lest the Common Enemy of souls, seeing the King's determination, inspires the Pope with his present fears and reluctance, which will alienate all the faith and devotion towards the See Apostolic. The sparks of that opposition, which have been extinguished with such care and vigilance, will blaze forth to the utmost danger of all here and elsewhere." He ends up with these notable and noble words: "If no attention be paid to my loyalty, words, advice, and judgment, whatever may be the result, the world will be conscious that this King has never failed in his obedience to the Holy See, and that I have omitted no part of my duty."[1]

We have said enough to explain Wolsey's part in the Divorce question. He truly says, he had omitted no part of his duty either to the King or to the Pope. Clement had, from the master mind of England, full knowledge of what the result would be if he denied justice; but the Spaniard was an ever present and pressing fear.[2] The

[1] Brewer, iv. 4897.

[2] Sylvester Darius to Wolsey (November 5, 1528): "At the Court (Bayonne) it is thought certain that the Emperor will send 9000 or 10,000 foot to Italy in the spring" (Cotton MS., Vesp. C. lv. 265). Du Bellay also writes (December 9, 1528) that Campeggio told him in conversation about the Emperor's intention to go to Italy; that at that moment he had a great mind to attempt it, which was a matter of serious apprehension, for if he came the Pope would not dare do otherwise than to take his part ("Le Grand Histoire du Divorce de Henri VIII.," iii. 235).

evil of to-day was possibly greater than that of to-morrow. So Clement chose his path: and Wolsey continued his, knowing full well where it must soon lead him—to the grave.

We must hurry on. To checkmate Wolsey's main point, that the Bull of Dispensation of Julius II. was invalid, the Queen's party brought forward as evidence a copy of a Brief supposed to supply the defects of the Bull. This Brief was sent, it is said, to Isabella, then on her deathbed, for her consolation. It is remarkable that whereas the English Records possessed a copy of the all-important Bull, they had none of the Brief supposed to supplement it. Katharine herself appears not to have known of its existence until the Divorce came to the point.[1] The copy, sent from Spain, was carefully scrutinised and was found to bear the same date indeed as the Bull, but was drawn in a style that was altogether informal. The manifest occasion which the defects of this Brief gave for suspicion as to its genuineness were further increased when Wolsey learnt that, at Rome, no trace of such an important document could be found, and that Charles persistently refused to produce the original. Clement himself was obliged to write to Campeggio that he authorised him to reject whatever evidence was tendered on behalf of this Brief as being an

[1] Brewer, iv. 5425.

evident forgery.[1] But the Pope would not commit himself further at all on the point.

Thus, while in England obstacles were raised to prevent the trial taking place, in Italy the Spanish were insisting upon the Commission being revoked and the cause itself advoked.[2] In April 1529 the Pope, in spite of his former promise, consented to do so,[3] but he would not agree to the English request to order the Emperor to produce, within a hundred days, the original Brief or to have it declared false. "This would be imperious language," says Sanga to Campeggio (April 21, 1529), "which is not customary to use to any prince, much less to a most powerful Emperor at whose mercy his Holiness finds himself."[4] But in spite of all excuses, Wolsey forced on things at home, and at last the Legatine

[1] Pocock i. p. 184. What had really happened in Spain can be gathered from a letter written by the Bishop of Worcester to Henry VII., dated March 17, 1505. He said that the Pope desired him to explain the legitimate reasons that existed for the delay in sending the Bull of Dispensation, and also his annoyance that it had become known that copies of the Bull had been sent in confidence to Isabella, then dying, to give her the consolation that everything was proceeding satisfactorily. See "Letters and Papers illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III. and Henry VII." (Roll Series), vol. i. p. 243.

[2] The words *revocation*, *avocation*, and *advocation* are terms used in Canon Law to express different phases of the same process. In the present case *Revocation* meant the recalling of the powers of the Legates; *Avocation*, the removal of the cause from their jurisdiction; and *Advocation*, summoning it before the tribunals of the Roman *Curia*.

[3] Brewer, iv. 5440.

[4] Ibid., 5477.

Court was opened. He probably knew that the whole business would be futile, and that Campeggio would not proceed to sentence. But at any rate such a step might force the Pope to come to a decision, and it would establish the contention on which he relied. On June 18, 1529, four years almost since the affair began, the Legatine Court opened at Blackfriars, and after adjournment reassembled on the 21st. What took place on that occasion is well known.[1] It is not necessary for us to tell of Katherine's appeal to the Holy See, nor of the subsequent proceedings which lasted until July 23, when Campeggio, instead of giving sentence, prorogued the Court on the pretext of the Roman custom of suspending all legal proceedings from the end of July until the beginning of October. These are all commonplaces of History. As far as Wolsey was concerned the fight for the Divorce was over. He had been outwitted by Italian shiftiness and Spanish terrorism. There remained now only for him to bear the fruits of failure. Henry was exasperated by the trickery to which he had been exposed, and, urged on by Wolsey's personal enemies, now

[1] Writes Sanga to Campeggio (May 29, 1529): "Since you have not been able to prevent the commencement of the proceedings, his Holiness warns you that the process must be slow and that no sentence must in any manner be pronounced. For this purpose you will not lack a thousand means and pretexts, if upon no other point at least upon the Brief which has been produced. . . . You are not to come to judgment on any consideration." — Brewer, iv. 5604.

19. LORENZO CAMPEGGIO, 1474—1539, Cardinal—Legate.

held him accountable for a result he had indeed foreseen, but for which he was in no way responsible.[1]

Putting aside the point raised by Wolsey as to the insufficiency of the Dispensation, on the legal ground of the impediment of Public Honesty, the question whether the Pope could dispense with the impediment of Affinity, which was the theological point raised by Henry, was then an open one. It is by no means necessary to say that the great universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris, who decided that no such power was invested in the Pope, gave their decision only when bribed. The question was based on the law as laid down in Leviticus, chap. xviii. verse 16. Those who held (like Bishop Fisher) that the Pope had power to grant a Dispensation to marry a deceased brother's wife, contended (1) that the prohibition in Leviticus only extended to the wife of a living brother, for Deuteronomy xxv. 5 distinctly orders such a marriage, in case the elder brother died without issue; (2) that the existing practice against such marriages was only of ecclesiastical institution, and therefore could be dispensed by the Church. The opinion, however, in England seemed to be largely against this latter view. A few days before the Legatine Court adjourned, that is to say,

[1] De Mendoza to Charles V. (July 30, 1529): "The Queen has written to me that she perceives that all the King's anger at his ill success will be visited on Wolsey."—(Brewer, iv. 5803.)

on July 13, 1530, a petition was sent to the Pope from the Lords, Spiritual and Temporal, imploring him to consent to the King's desire, pointing out that "a very ocean of ills" would overwhelm the country if he refused. The signers go on to say that they, if their father forsake them, will be left as orphans, and will be driven to look after themselves, and if a remedy from Rome is denied, they will have to seek one where they can.[1]

This petition, which only met with a scolding reply (September 27), was signed by men whose names stand too high to regard them as mere creatures of the King. Besides Wolsey, we have the honoured names of Warham of Canterbury, and four other bishops, and twenty-two abbats, including those of Glaston, Reading, and Colchester, who afterwards gave their lives for conscience' sake. To these were joined two dukes, two marquises, thirteen earls, twenty-seven barons, and eleven other "*milites and doctores.*" This petition could not have been thus signed unless there was a strong opinion that the Pope could, if he would, declare the marriage null and void from the beginning.

[1] Rymer, xiv. 405–407.

CHAPTER XI

THE CARDINAL'S GREATNESS

The grandest phase of his life—Accused of high treason—*Vanitas Vanitatum*—The minister of Christ—His final disgrace—His poverty—No comfort or sympathy from Clement—A solitary friend—Katherine's goodwill—His spiritual life—Says mass—His office—Is ill—With the Carthusians—Sits in contemplation—Persuaded of vainglory—"Divers shirts of hair"—His last Lent—Prepares for death—Goes to York—Keeps the Pasch at Peterborough—His Maunday—Sings High Mass very devoutly—At Southwell—His hospitality—Reconciles enemies—His charity to the poor—Loved by all his people—"To bishops a right good example"—Visits the churches—Still the *Cardinalis Pacificus*—Confirms for eight hours—At Ferrybridge—At Cawood—Visited by the Dean—"A very father and mutual brother"—His lowliness—Preparations for his installation—His arrest—The York Breviary—General lamentations—"The foul Evil"—The loss of the poor—His hair-shirts—Taken ill—Says his Rosary—Submission to God's will—Arrives at Leicester—The White Monks of St. Benedict—"My bones"—"St. Andrew's eve"—Confesses his sins—God's service and the King's—No distrust in God—Great mercy and pity—The blessed Oil of the Sick—His farewell—His funeral—His grave to-day unknown—The abbey destroyed.

We have now to study Wolsey in what is the grandest phase of his life. Despoiled of all his goods, shut out from the presence of the King by enemies who knew and dreaded his influence, stripped of all his dignities and basely accused of high treason,[1] stricken in body and soul, and a

[1] He was accused of high treason for having acted as Legate. He pleaded guilty, and offered the King all his goods. It is often a matter for surprise that Wolsey acknowledged himself guilty of Praemunire, when he had the King's leave under the Seal to accept

prey to a grief which reveals a highly sensitive nature, Wolsey rose to the occasion and showed the true nobility of his soul. He found in God and His service an abundant consolation for his earthly disgrace. And it seems to us that this shows the solid and deep foundation of godliness that already existed in his soul. *Vanitas Vanitatum!* He had drunk more deeply of the cup than most men. When Providence called him to fill the grandest and proudest positions he had done so to the best of his ability, but he had not, as we shall see, forgotten his God. And now, when adversity came, though the breaking with worldly glory was most painful, there was no difficulty in continuing and in advancing in God's service. Wolsey had ceased to be a minister of an earthly king; but he did not forget that he was still a minister of Christ.

Upon his final disgrace, October 17, 1529, he

the office. He explained the position to Cavendish, who told him that people were wondering. When he found that his enemies had brought the matter so to pass against him as to induce the King to make it a personal matter, and upon the occasion thereof to seize all his goods and possession, he was sure that the King "rather than yield or take a foil in the law, and thereby restore to me all my goods again," would bring about his "utter undoing and destruction"; or at least condemn him to perpetual imprisonment. He preferred, therefore, to throw himself on the King's mercy "and live at large like a poor vicar than to lie in prison with all the goods and honours" he had. Wolsey knew the Tudor temper. Besides, there was always hope of a restoration to Henry's goodwill had not "the night crow [Anne Boleyn] called continually upon the King in his ear" (p. 249).

was ordered to keep at his house at Esher, a manor belonging to the bishopric of Winchester and not far from Hampton Court. There, says Cavendish, "my lord and his family continued the space of three or four weeks without beds, sheets, tablecloths, cups, and dishes to eat our meat, or to lie in. . . . And thus continued he in this strange estate until the feast of All-Hallown tide was past."[1] He was so destitute that he had to borrow what was absolutely necessary for himself and his reduced household.

As we have said, not one single word of comfort or sympathy came to him from the Pope, for whose prerogatives he fell. Few, indeed, are the marks of kindness he met with, although, as Campeggio wrote to Salviati (November 5, 1529), he had done nothing in the past, so far as ecclesiastical matters were concerned, to merit such disgrace as had befallen him.[2] One friend stands out in the person of Abbat Kyderminstre of Winchcombe, who wrote (October 21, 1529) to Cromwell, now in the ascendant: "I beg you to write two or three lines of the prosperity and welfare of my Lord, and ye shall do more for my comfort than I can express. You know my true, hearty mind towards him, and my prayers for his continuance."[3] And Katherine, too, expressed her goodwill. She knew he was not her enemy.

[1] P. 192.
[2] Theiner, p. 588.
[3] Brewer, iv. 6014.

We get glimpses of his spiritual life at this period from Cavendish. "I was called into the closet to see and prepare all things ready for my Lord, who intended that day to say mass there himself; and so I did. And then my Lord came hither with his chaplain, one Dr. Marshall, saying first his matins, and heard two masses on his knees. And then after he was confessed, he himself said mass. And when he had finished mass and all his divine service [*office*], returned to his chamber, where he dined among divers of his doctors."[1]

Loss of sleep and appetite, together with dropsy, made it imperative that he should move to "some drier air and place"; so after Candlemas he obtained leave to go to Richmond. Cavendish tells how Wolsey was "accustomed towards night to walk in the garden there to say his service" with his chaplain.[2] Here at

[1] P. 196.

[2] Richard Fiddes, in his "Life of Wolsey" (p. 233), says: "One thing ought to be mentioned for his honour . . . that notwithstanding the multiplicity of affairs wherewith the Cardinal was taken up, and all the pageantry with which he was surrounded in his several offices, he never omitted at the usual hours, regularly and after a pious manner, to perform his public and private devotions" (pp. 105, 106). There is a remarkable example of this during his French embassy; and Cavendish, who was in attendance, is our informant. From him we learn that Wolsey would not let the greatest press of business or fatigue be an excuse for not hearing mass and saying his office. After a hard day's work, during which he had gained a diplomatic triumph, Wolsey went to bed; but he was up "about four of the clock sitting down to write letters into England unto the King, commanding one of his chap-

12. ANNE BOLEYN, c. 1510—1536.
From a drawing by Holbein.

Richmond he was near the Carthusian Monastery of Sheen, and our chronicler tells us: "My Lord then in the beginning of Lent [removed] out of the lodge into the Charter-house of Richmond, where he lay in a lodging which Doctor Colet, sometime Dean of Paul's, had made for himself, until he [Wolsey] removed northward, which was in the Passion week after; and he had to the same house a secret gallery which went out his chamber into the Charter-house church, whither he resorted every day to their service; and at afternoons he would sit in contemplation with one or other of the most ancient fathers of that house in his cell, who among them by their counsel persuaded him from the vain glory of this world, and gave him divers shirts of hair, the which he often wore afterwards whereof I am certain."[1] Thus in prayer, penance, and retirement did Wolsey spend his last Lent. He knew death was not far off, and as a Christian he made ready to meet his summons.

lains to prepare him the mass, insomuch as his said chaplain stood revested until four of the clock in the afternoon." For these twelve long hours the Cardinal sat, "having all that time his nightcap and kerchief on his head," and never rose from the table, neither did he take sup nor bite until he had finished writing and despatched the courier. Then he took a drink, "and that done, he went to mass and said his other divine service with his chaplain, as he was accustomed to do, and then went straight into a garden; and after he had walked the space of an hour or more and said his evensong, he went to dinner and supper all at once, and making a small repast, he went to his bed to take his rest for that night" (p. 112).

[1] P. 237.

He received orders to go to York. Setting out at the beginning of Passion week, he made his night's stay at the abbeys and religious houses, which still kept open house for the wayfarer. By the end of that week he arrived at Peterborough, where he stayed until the Thursday in Easter week, celebrating the Paschal solemnities among the Black Monks of St. Benedict. "Upon Palm Sunday he went in procession with the monks, bearing his palm; setting forth God's service right honourably with such singing men [1] as he then had remaining with him.

[1] Wolsey seems to have had a special care for the choral worship. He made particular arrangements in both his school and College for the singers. And in his own private chapel, the *schola cantorum* was on a magnificent scale. His "chapel" consisted of "a dean, a sub-dean, a repeater of the choir [precentor?], a gospeller, a pisteller, and twelve singing priests; of scholars he had first: a master of the children, twelve singing children, sixteen singing men, with a servant to attend upon the said children" (Cavendish, p. 34). Evidently the twelve singing priests were for the office and plain song, while the twelve boys and sixteen men were for the "prick-song," of which he was a great admirer. One of Wolsey's singing boys was the subject of a correspondence between Henry and the Cardinal. Pace, the royal secretary, writing from Reading in March 1518 (Brewer, ii. n. 4023), says that the King has heard the boy and hinted he would like to have him in his own chapel. Of course Wolsey had to offer him. On the 25th Pace writes: "My Lord, if it were not for the personal love that the King's Highness doth bear unto your Grace, surely he would have out of your chapel not children only but also men; for his Grace hath plainly shown unto Cornish (*the Master of the Chapel Royal*) that your Grace's chapel is better than his, and proved the same by this reason, that if any manner of new song be brought unto both the said chapels to be sung *ex improviso*, the said song should be better and more surely handled by your chapel than by his Grace's" (ibid., 4024). The King on the 29th thanked the

And upon Maunday Thursday he made his Maunday in Our Lady's chapel, having fifty-nine poor men, whose feet he washed, wiped, and kissed; each of these poor men had twelve pence in money, three ells of canvas to make them shirts, a pair of new shoes, a cast of mead, three red herrings, and three white herrings, and the odd person had two shillings. Upon Easter Day

Cardinal for the child of his chapel, whom he wouldn't have desired except from necessity . . . and had spoken to Cornish to treat the child honestly, *i.e.* "otherwise than he doth his own" (ibid., 4044). "Robin, my boy," then joined the Chapel Royal, and Pace wrote that "Cornish doth greatly laud and praise the child of your chapel sent hither, not only for his sure and cleanly singing, but also for his good and crafty descant, and doth in like manner extol Mr. Pigot (*Wolsey's 'Master of the Children'*) for the teaching of him" (ibid.). Soardino, the Mantuan Ambassador in France, gives a detailed description of a grand high mass sung by Wolsey (June 23, 1520) on the occasion of the "Field of Cloth of Gold." According to the English use, he was served by two bishops as deacon and sub-deacon, while other English bishops in their pontificals surrounded him. "The choristers of the two chapels of France and England sang this Mass; the music by Perino, accompanied by an organ with trombones and cornets" (Brown, iii. 933). Who this Perino was we cannot tell: unless the Mantuan has Italianised the name of one Robert Perrot, who was organist of Magdalen College at that time, and an eminent musician (Bloxam, ii. p. 182). The poet Storer speaks of the Cardinal's chapel in terms that seem to show it was not from mere ostentation that Wolsey showed the magnificence of Divine worship:—

> "I made my chapel pure Devotion's seat,
> Meet for the service of the Heav'nly King;
> The tongues of the most learned did intreat
> Of His decrees, and skilful priests did sing,
> And singing boys use their hearts' trebling string:
> Such ornaments are most beseeming us:
> In God's behalf let noble peers do thus."
>
> —"Metrical Life of Wolsey."

he rode to the Resurrection,[1] and that morning he went in procession in his Cardinal's vesture with his hat and hood on his head, and he himself sang there the High Mass very devoutly, and granted Clean Remission to all the hearers, and there continued all the holidays." [2]

Then, on his way once more, until he got within the boundaries of his vast diocese. By Whitsuntide (June 5) he was in his own manor of Southwell, where for the most part of the summer he remained, exercising hospitality. "He kept a noble house and plenty of both meat and drink for all comers, both for rich and poor, and much alms given at his gates. He used much charity and pity among his poor tenants and others; although the fame thereof was no pleasant sound in the ears of his enemies, and of such as bare him no goodwill, howbeit the common people will report as they find cause; for he was much more familiar among all persons than he was accustomed, and most gladdest when he had an occasion to do them good. He made many agreements and concords between gentlemen and gentlemen, and between some gentlemen and their wives that had been long asunder, and in great trouble and divers other agreements between other persons; making great assemblies

[1] The ceremony of bringing the Blessed Sacrament from the Sepulchre where it had lain since the Good Friday. This took place early on Easter morning.

[2] Pp. 242, 243.

for the same purpose, and feasting of them, not sparing for any costs, where he might make peace and amity; which purchased him much love and friendship in the country."[1]

Another witness is a book which came out in 1536 from the King's own press, with the title, "A Remedy for Sedition." The writer thus refers to Wolsey: "Who was less beloved in the North than my Lord Cardinal (God have his soul) before he was amongst them? Who better beloved after he had been there awhile? We hate ofttimes whom we have good cause to love. It is a wonder to see how they were turned; how of utter enemies they became his dear friends. He gave bishops a right good example, how they might win men's hearts. There were few holy days but he would ride five or six miles from his house, now to this parish church, now to that, and there cause one or other of his doctors to make a sermon unto the people. He sat amongst them, and said Mass before all the parish. He saw why churches were made. He began to restore them to their right and proper use. He brought his dinner with him and bade divers of the parish to it. He inquired whether there was any debate or grudge between any of them; if there were, after dinner he sent for the parties to the church and made them one." Wolsey was still the *Cardinalis Pacificus*.

P. 251.

But the picture one loves most to dwell upon is that of the journey to Cawood Castle, seven miles from York. On the way he stayed at St. Oswald's Abbey, "where he himself confirmed children in the church from eight of the clock in the morning until twelve of the clock at noon. And making a short dinner, resorted again to the church at one of the clock, and there began again to confirm more children until four of the clock, where he was at the last constrained for weariness to sit down in a chair, the number of children was such. That done, he said his evensong, and then went to supper, and rested himself there all that night."[1] The next morning, before setting out, he laid hands on "almost a hundred children more," and, as he rode on in the crisp air of a Yorkshire morning, he found grouped round a stone cross which stood on a little green near Ferrybridge, a group of nearly two hundred children waiting for their Archbishop to confirm them. At once he alighted from his mule, and administered the sacrament under the canopy of heaven.

At Cawood he remained, intending in a short time to be installed in his cathedral. To him came the Dean and other officials of the chapter, "welcoming him joyously into the country, saying that it was to them no small comfort to see him among them as their chief head, which had been so long absent from them, being all that while like

[1] Cavendish, p. 261.

fatherless children, comfortless, trusting shortly to see him among them in his own church. It is, quoth he, the special cause of all my travel into this country, not only to be among you for a time, but also to spend my life with you as a very father and as a mutual brother."[1] He arranged that his installation should take place in strict accordance with the "laudable ordinances and constitutions" of the Church of York, but he determined that all should be done in a quiet, unostentatious manner. His predecessors had been wont to go barefooted through the streets from the gates to the minster, but they walked on cloth, which was afterwards distributed to the poor. "We do intend, God willing," he said, "to go afoot from thence without any such glory, in the vamps of our hosen. For I take God to be my very judge that I presume not to go thither for any triumph or vain glory, but only to fulfil the observance and rules of the Church to which, as ye say, I am bound. And therefore I shall desire you all to hold you contented with my simplicity; and also I command all my servants to go as humbly, without any other sumptous apparel than they be constantly used, and that is comely and decent to wear."[2]

The day fixed was the Monday after All Saints (November 7). But his enemies at court had not

[1] Cavendish, pp. 265–66.
[2] Ibid., pp. 268–69.

forgotten him. On the perjured testimony of his Venetian physician, De Augustinis, a new charge of high treason was brought against him, and a warrant was issued for his arrest and imprisonment in the Tower. He was arrested at Cawood on the 4th of November, a Friday, as he sat down to dinner. In the midst of his anguish he found comfort in the words of the office of the day in the Breviary of his Church of York: *O constantia Martyrum laudabilis! O charitas inextinguibilis! O patientia invincibilis quæ licet inter pressuras persequentium visa sit despicabilis, invenietur in laudem et gloriam ac honorem in tempore tribulationis.*[1]

On the Sunday evening he left under custody amidst the lamentations of the common folk, who to some three thousand crowded round the gates, crying, "'God save your Grace! God save your Grace! The foul Evil take all them that hath thus taken you from us! We pray God that a very vengeance may light upon them.' This they ran crying after him through the town of Cawood, they loved him so well. For surely they had a great loss of him, both the poor and the rich; for the poor had of him great relief,

[1] These words are from the Responsory to the Ninth Lesson in the *Commune Plurimorum Martyrum*, and were also used in the office of All Saints (then being celebrated) after the Sixth Lesson. See *Breviarium ad usum Insignis Ecclesiæ Eboracensis* (Surtees Society), vol. ii. pp. 33 and 653 from the text of 1493.

2. RUINS OF LEICESTER ABBEY.

and the rich lacked his counsel in any business that they had to do, which caused him to have such love among them in the country."[1]

On his way to Pomfret he remembered he had left behind him his penitential of hair-shirts, and sent privily his confidential servant Cavendish after them, who brought them in "a red buckram bag" sealed with the Cardinal's seal. These he wore for the rest of his life. He remained at Sheffield Park, the Earl of Shrewsbury's, for eighteen days. Here he was seized with dysentery, brought on by shattered health and excessive agitation, and the malady was increased by the unskilful treatment of his physician. He refused all the distractions provided by his hosts, but "applied his prayers continually very devoutly."[2] And here, while sitting in the gallery saying his Rosary, the news came that Sir William Kingston, Constable of the Tower, with twenty-four of the guard had arrived to take him to London. "Well, Sir," said he to the Earl of Shrewsbury, who was trying to comfort him, "well, Sir, as God wills, so be it. I am subject to fortune, and to fortune I submit myself, being a true man ready to accept such ordinances as God hath provided for me." That night the Cardinal was taken much worse, and his doctor saw that the end was not far off. The next day he set out, and had to be held on his mule, so weak and ill was he. He arrived at

[1] P. 290. [2] P. 299.

the Abbey at Leicester on the night of Saturday, November 26th, and was received at the gate by the Abbat and convent. With the light of many torches and much worship did the White Monks of St. Benedict receive him. There he was to find his rest. The half-dying Cardinal knew his hour was come. Said he: "Father Abbat, I am come hither to leave my bones among you." This was on Saturday. He straightway took to his bed, and never again rose. One night he called for some food, "For I intend," said he, "this day, God willing, to make me strong to the intent I may occupy myself in confession, and make me ready to God." Yet, when he had tasted of the dish and found it was made of meat, he would eat no more, "it being a fasting day and St. Andrew's eve." He then spent an hour with his ghostly father confessing the sins of his life, and on bidding him good-bye, said, "I tarry but the Will and Pleasure of God to render unto Him my simple soul unto His divine hands." And then it was that he said to Sir William Kingston these words which the Dramatist has made memorable for all time: "Well, well, Master Kingston, I see how the matter against me is framed, but if I had served God as diligently as I have done the King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs." There was here no distrust in God. It was evident that the feeling of sinfulness was ever before his mind,

and Wolsey felt the blessed but heavy hand of God touching him in great mercy and pity.

After sending words of warning to the King, especially against the danger of a Lutheran outbreak, "he began to draw his speech at length, and his tongue to fail; his eyes being set in his head, whose sight failed him."[1] Then did his attendants put him in mind of Christ's bitter Passion; and the Abbat came with speed to anoint him with the blessed Oil of the Sick. Thus surrounded with holy prayers and helped with the Rites of that Church for which he had so nobly laboured, the end came. As the clock struck eight on the morning of Tuesday, November 29, Thomas Wolsey said farewell to the world and its vanities.

The body, in its hair-shirt of penance, and clothed in the pontifical garments, with mitre, pall, cross, and ring, lay in state until four or five of the clock of that same day, when in the gloom of the winter evening it was carried into the church by the monks and set in the Lady Chapel, "with many and divers tapers of wax burning about the hearse, and divers poor men sitting about the same, holding of torches light in their hands, who watched about the dead body all night, whilst the Canons sang *Dirige* and other devout orisons. And about four of the clock in the morning (November 30) they sang

[1] P. 324.

Mass. And that done and the body interred, Master Kingston, with us, being his servants, were present at his said funeral and offered at his Mass. And by that time that all things were finished, and all ceremonies that to such a person were decent and convenient, it was about six of the clock in the morning."[1]

The grave of the greatest man of his age is to-day unknown. When Henry, left to himself, broke away all restraint and disgraced the name of King, the Abbey church of Leicester was destroyed, and with it all traces of the grave of his great minister.

[1] P. 328.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

The great Cardinal as a Churchman — A courtier's life — The higher qualities of the Churchman—His character bears examination—The greatest Churchman of his age—His "faults and failings" — His supposed illegitimate children — An examination of the evidence—Unlikely—Formulated by his enemies—The age tolerated Alexander VI.—No defence needed — Insufficient proof — Thomas Winter — Dorothy Clansey—Trading on Cromwell's feeling—The other side—Wolsey's great expiation—"The blessedness of being little"—"He died fearing God."

I HAVE set before the reader a picture of the great Cardinal as a Churchman, and have drawn the details from the records of his work. I have shown him in the midst of a courtier's life still preserving the higher qualities of the Churchman. Even in this capacity his character, to use the words of Mr. Brewer, "need not apprehend an examination still more rigid and more dispassionate." Truth to say, the more Wolsey is studied in the setting of his own times, the greater every way does he appear. He stands head and shoulders above all his ecclesiastical contemporaries.

A word as to "those faults and failings the least consistent with his ecclesiastical profession" to which Mr. Brewer refers. It is said that Wolsey left behind him two illegitimate children, a son and a daughter, "by one Lark's daughter," Shakespeare's "nut-brown maid." Going very carefully into the whole question, I must confess that I have been unable to come to any definite conclusion. If such a *liaison* did exist, it must have been about the years 1509–10; and I leave it to the reader to consider whether it is likely so cautious a man as Wolsey, even with the lax ideas of those days, would have so ventured his reputation at that particular period when he was not sure of his position at the Court of the new King. Again, it must be remembered that it was not until after his fall that his enemies formulated this charge. But, on the other hand, we must remember such *liaisons* were not viewed in the same light as they are nowadays. An age that could tolerate Alexander VI., who certainly, while Pope, had a son, would look mildly upon such lapses on the part of a Cardinal. I do not want to defend Wolsey. Such things, in view of the greatness he displayed at the end, would not take away from his character as it then was. But there are still difficulties in the way of accepting the accusation which must not be lost. Thomas Winter, his supposed son, was stated in after years by

his former tutor, Volosenus, to have been the son of Wolsey's sister; and in all the papers concerning him there is nothing opposed to this relationship. As to the daughter, Dorothy Clansey, a nun at Shaftesbury, there is a letter from one John Clansey written to Cromwell, evidently about 1534–36, in which he states that Dorothy Clansey, who was entered as his own daughter, was in reality Wolsey's. He asks that she, then twenty-four years of age, might be allowed to be professed and not be obliged to leave the convent according to the orders which had been lately issued. His request was granted. When the house was suppressed in 1540, she received a pension of £4, 13s. 4d. I do not think it improbable that Clansey had an eye to the future pension, and so traded on Cromwell's feeling for his old master.[1] This is the only evidence I can find that the young lady was Wolsey's daughter; and I submit that, considering the circumstances under which John Clansey wrote his letter, it is not improbable that he was anxious to secure a provision for his own child at the expense of the good name of the Cardinal.

On the other hand, it may be contended that John Clansey would not have dared to appeal to

[1] Cromwell befriended Thomas Winter after Wolsey's death, and secured to him some part of the benefices the Cardinal had given him.

Cromwell if he were simply trying to father his own child on the dead Cardinal. Whatever may be the truth, and whatever sins Wolsey may have committed, let it be borne in mind that History records in no uncertain language that great was his expiation and repentance.

> "His overthrow heaped happiness upon him;
> For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
> And found the blessedness of being little;
> And, to add greater honours to his age
> Than man could give him, he died fearing God."
> —"King Henry VIII.," Act iv. sc. 2.

APPENDIX

WOLSEY'S COAT OF ARMS

MR. EVERARD GREEN, *Rouge Dragon*, in a scholarly article on *A Plea for the Resurrection of Heraldry* in the *Nineteenth Century*, June 1896, gives the following interesting reading of Wolsey's Coat of Arms:—

"In the cumbersome coat of Cardinal Wolsey, *Sable, on a cross engrailed Argent, a lion passant Purpure, between four leopards' faces, Azure, on a chief Or, a Lancaster Rose between two Cornish choughs proper*, the herald must see the sable shield and cross engrailed of the Uffords, Earls of Suffolk; in the Azure leopard faces, those on the coat of De la Pole, Earls of Suffolk; in the purple Lion, the badge of Pope Leo the Tenth;[1] in the rose, the Lancastrian sympathies of the builder of Cardinal's College (Christ Church, Oxford); and in the two choughs the reputed or assigned arms of St. Thomas of Canterbury, *Argent, three choughs proper*. Thus in the Cardinal's coat we see his county and its history, his religion and politics, his christian name, and his patron saint."

[1] Leo the Tenth was never tired of using the words of the Apocalypse, "Leo de Tribu Juda."

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